

" THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE DELHI TERRITORY
1803 - 1832."

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This thesis traces the evolution of civil administration within the Delhi Territory under its Residents between 1803 and 1832, and indicates the extent of their political duties in connection with the court of Delhi and the adjoining states of Rajputana and Hindustan. From the creation of the Delhi Territory in 1803, when lands on the western bank of the River Jumna were assigned for the support of Shah Alam and the Delhi royal family, the main political task of the Delhi Residents was to reconcile the King of Delhi to his position as a stipendiary of the East India Company and to curb his persistent attempts to regain the power formerly wielded by his Mughul ancestors. Beyond the frontiers of the Delhi Territory, the Residents exercised a political superintendence over states in subordinate alliance with the British Government, expounding to them the rights and obligations of the paramount power. They also had charge of the protected Sikh and Hill States, and were the channels of official communication to the independent states of Lahore and Kabul. The decision taken by Lord Wellesley's Government to place the Delhi Territory outside the range of the Bengal Regulations left the Delhi Residents free to evolve a system of administration suited to the needs of the inhabitants of the Delhi Territory, incorporating many of their ancient usages and institutions. Thus, they developed a system of

revenue collection and assessment, of customs administration, and of judicial procedure known as "the old Delhi system." It eventually approximated closely to the Bengal administration, but was never absorbed into it. Its development under successive Residents, with the modifications entailed by the increasing prosperity and productivity of the Delhi Territory, is depicted against the general unsettlement in north and central India caused by the two Maratha Wars and the insurgence of the Pindaris and thugs.

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INTRODUCTION.

This thesis is the study of an area comprising the city of Delhi and the lands surrounding it on the western side of the River Jumna, known for many years as the Delhi Territory or the Assigned Lands. It was, in origin, a tract of land set aside to provide revenue for the support of the royal family of Delhi after British forces had defeated the Maratha powers in 1803 and had taken the Mughul Emperor and his dominions under their protection. For nearly thirty years, under exceptionally able rulers, it formed a distinct administrative unit, developing with a freedom not possible to the neighbouring provinces of the Bengal Presidency which were governed by the Regulation Code. During this time, it also exerted an influence on the affairs of north and central India out of all proportion to its size and resources. The purpose of this thesis is to show how far-reaching was the political influence exercised by the Delhi Residents over the adjoining states of Rajputana and Hindustan, and to trace the evolution of civil administration within the Delhi Territory under their rule.

Between 1803 and 1805, Lord Wellesley laid down the lines along which the Delhi Territory was to develop. He fixed its eastern boundary along the course of the Jumna; a decision which placed the Delhi Territory outside the Bengal Presidency and gave it the character of a frontier province. The

Governor-General also decided that conditions prevailing at Delhi rendered unsuitable the introduction of the Bengal Regulations; and he provided for its government by appointing a Resident to be the local head of the administration, responsible directly to the Governor-General in Council. This officer was vested with a political as well as a civil authority: for besides being responsible for all branches of internal administration, in his political capacity, the Resident was to represent the Governor-General at the court of the King of Delhi; and on the Governor-General's behalf, handle all matters concerning the princes and chiefs of north India and Rajputana.

The Resident at Delhi was thus vested with a two-fold authority. As head of the civil administration he was responsible for the assessment and collection of revenue, for judicial procedure, and for the maintenance of law and order within the province. Defence against external attack lay outside his charge, and in times of urgency he was empowered to call in military aid. The Resident's political jurisdiction embraced all matters concerning the King of Delhi and his family; and he also dealt directly with the many jagirdars or petty chiefs whose estates formed enclaves within the Delhi Territory. The political authority of the Delhi Resident, however, stretched far beyond the confines of the land he governed. It reached to Lahore and Kabul; to the Sikh chiefs of the Cis-Sutlej area; to Bikaner and the states

of the west; and to the Rajput principalities south-west of Delhi. It was this wide political jurisdiction which gave the office of Resident at Delhi a prestige which made it one of the most honoured posts in the Company's service.

Between 1803 and 1818 events both in Europe and in India combined to render the Resident's political duties especially important. Until 1815, Britain was engaged in the struggle against Napoleon which had important repercussions on Indian policy: and within India, there followed the war with Nepal, the insurgence of the Pindaris, and the second Maratha War. While Napoleon was at large in Europe, French schemes to invade India from the north-west were rife. This was a major factor behind Indian policy between 1803 and 1815; and it goes far to explain the early importance attached by British authorities to the possession of the person of the Mughul and the plans made for his support and safe-keeping. It explains also the need for an amicable understanding with Ranjit Singh of Lahore, accomplished as a result of Metcalfe's mission in 1809; and the official protection given to the Sikh chiefs of the Cis-Sutlej area. It accounts also for the careful watch kept on Persia and Afghanistan, and the asylum offered later to Shah Shuja, the ex-king of Kabul. In all these matters the Delhi Residents had to interpret and give effect to policy promulgated from Calcutta, in the course of which they frequently had to use their own judgment and

initiative in dealing with the situation of the moment.

After 1815, there was a difference of emphasis in Indian policy; and political interest tended to shift to Nepal, the Assam frontier, and to central India. Once the French menace was removed, the European powers at the Treaty of Vienna formally recognised the territorial sovereignty of Great Britain in India. From this time, the idea of the British Government as the paramount power in India began to assume definite shape: and at Delhi, Metcalfe played a vital part in influencing Hastings' decision that the British Government should stand forth as the protecting power against the Pindari ravages in central India. He became the Governor-General's chief agent in negotiating the subsidiary alliances which, at the end of the second Maratha War, were concluded with the Rajput states: and after 1818, an important part of the Delhi Resident's duties was to interpret to these subordinate states the rights and obligations of the protecting power. To deal in detail with the internal history of the Rajput states is outside the scope of this thesis; but a critical estimate of the success with which the later Residents tackled this part of their work has been given. I have also indicated the changing attitude of the Calcutta Government under Bentinck towards intervention in the internal affairs of its subordinate allies; and the repercussions of this policy upon the future of the Delhi Residency: for when Bentinck finally decided to separate the Rajput states from the jurisdiction

of Delhi, he decided also to abolish the Delhi Residency.

Within the Delhi Territory, the main political work of the Resident was to represent the Governor-General at the court of the Mughul. This entailed frequent personal attendance at the palace; the presentation and interpretation of Government's views to the King both verbally and in writing; and the difficult task of persuading an oriental monarch, sensitive to a degree about his rights and prerogatives, to conform to a policy which ran counter to his whole outlook and desires. The character of the initial settlement made with Shah Alam and the troubled relationship which developed between his successor Akbar II and the Calcutta Government, form an essential part of this thesis: for without the presence of the King and his court at Delhi, and the assigning of the surrounding lands to provide revenue for his support, the Delhi Territory as such would never have been called into being, or have preserved for so long its distinctive characteristics. The King's demand for an augmented stipend and his claim to exercise the prerogatives of his Mughul ancestors have been dealt with by Edward Thompson, and more recently by Dr. Spear in his "Twilight of the Mughuls." While acknowledging what has already been published on this subject, I have endeavoured to set the whole issue against the changing political situation in north India and show how the King's position was inevitably affected by it. In this connection, two conclusions stand out predominantly. In the

first place, when all fear of a French invasion of India from the north-west was removed, possession of the person and authority of the King of Delhi ceased to be a political asset and tended to be regarded as an encumbrance by the British Government. This was particularly true of Lord Minto's Governor-Generalship when Akbar, influenced by feminine ambition within the palace, became increasingly urgent in his demands for actual power and the formal recognition of his sovereignty. Secondly, such demands were completely incompatible with the growing conception of the British Government as the paramount power in India; and during Lord Hastings' Governor-Generalship, these two conceptions of sovereignty openly clashed. The growing prosperity of the Delhi Territory under British administration, particularly its progressively increasing revenue, led to a revival of the King's demand for an increased stipend after Hastings' departure; and Amherst's refusal, on Metcalfe's advice, to alter the essential policy of his predecessors on this issue, caused Akbar to refer his cause to the highest authorities in England. His failure to achieve his end set the seal on the declining prestige of the Delhi royal house, and brought about a fundamental alteration in the status of the Delhi Territory. In tracing this controversy, I have endeavoured to emphasise the part taken by each of the Delhi Residents in their task of persuading the King to accept Government's views as to his powers and status; and to indicate

the extent to which they influenced the policy of Government on this question.

Many difficulties which confronted the Delhi Residents in the course of their political work occurred because the whole conception of the Delhi Territory was rooted in a compromise. Wellesley's original intention was that it should stand midway between an independent oriental kingdom under British protection and a province governed by the Company's Regulations; and that it should partake of the characteristics of both these forms of government. During the last two years of his Governor-Generalship Wellesley modified his views on this subject owing to Ochterlony's reports of the conditions existing at Delhi; and he decided that although the Delhi Territory should remain outside the Regulation Code of Bengal, executive power should be vested not in the King of Delhi but in the Resident. Though the King's power was to be purely nominal, the royal title was to be retained; and he was to be addressed with all the ceremony and subservience customary to an eastern monarch. It was in this shift of opinion between 1803 and 1805 that all the anomalies surrounding the King's position and rights were involved; and the extravagant language into which the Resident had to translate all Government's communications to the King only served to enhance misunderstanding on this issue. The suggestions contained in Wellesley's "Notes of Instructions" to Ochterlony in 1804, the purport of which the Resident

communicated to Shah Alam in writing and which subsequently formed the basis of all the royal claims, were never ratified by the Governor-General who modified them in the final agreement presented to the King on 29th May 1805. Some details even of this settlement were never put into operation but were allowed to lapse. The whole situation remained obscure; and since there was never any question of a formal treaty between Shah Alam and the British Government, and it was the Resident's task to make Government's decisions as palatable as possible to the powerless king, the obscurity with all its evil consequences persisted.

Wellesley's recall to England and the change of policy which took place under Barlow's Government still further complicated the situation in the Delhi Territory. By 1806, large areas on its western fringes had been separated and given to independent chiefs; while within the remaining area, numerous jagirs were carved out for chiefs who had renounced Sindia's service. This reduction in the size of the Delhi Territory had important results: in the first place, the direct connection between the King's stipend and the assigned lands was severed, for the smaller area could provide only a fraction of the required sum; secondly, the intersection of the Delhi Territory by large numbers of jagirs led to the indefinite postponement of the idea, mooted in 1806, that the Bengal Code should be introduced into the lands west of the Jumna; and

finally, Government's decision to discard responsibility for the outlying areas to the west of the Delhi Territory marked the beginning of a period of chaos in these regions which lasted until the Sikh chiefs were taken under British protection in 1809, and subsidiary alliances were concluded by the paramount power in 1818 with the Rajput states. Thus while the area under the direct administration of the Resident was considerably reduced in 1806, his political responsibilities were correspondingly increased. The balance, however, was righted during the following years as jagirs escheated to Government on the death of their owners; and with the acquisition first of Haryana, and later of Fatehabad and Sirsa, the boundaries of the Delhi Territory extended once more to the verge of the Western Desert. For these reasons, until 1818, the political duties of the Delhi Residents proved the weightier part of their task: but between 1819 and 1832, with the exception of Metcalfe's work in Rajputana during his second Delhi Residency, this emphasis was reversed; and the development of civil administration within the Delhi Territory became increasingly important.

The evolution of civil government in the Delhi Territory followed no prescribed pattern. Subject to the over-riding sanction of the Governor-General in Council and to the Government's expressed wish that the Delhi Territory should be administered "in the spirit of the Regulations," the Residents and Commissioners were given a free hand to develop

an ordered system of land assessment and revenue collection, of criminal and civil judicial procedure, and were allowed a semi-military force with which to maintain peace within its borders and on its frontiers. From the first, they made use of existing institutions and customs, modifying them as need arose, and introducing methods approved by Government from the neighbouring Bengal provinces as circumstances permitted; with no other object than to provide the best administration possible for the people they governed. Thus in the course of time, the system of tax-farming gave place to revenue collection based on the ordered survey and assessment of the villages: Muhammadan law was shorn of its worst barbarities and administered through courts presided over by the Residents and their subordinate officers; and while in the early unsettled days order was enforced by contingents of Skinner's Horse and the Delhi Najibs, these gradually made way for the thanadar and his men, and the village police. It was Seton who first realised the fundamental importance of preserving the ancient, customary usages of the village communities which flourished in almost every part of the Delhi Territory, and of using them as units of local administration; of negotiating with their mugaddams concerning revenue due from the village; and making use of their practice of communal responsibility for the recovery of stolen goods. Charles Metcalfe who grew up with the system, remained a convinced believer in its efficacy as a basis of

local government; and fought strenuously to preserve it intact when the introduction of individual settlements in later years threatened the village communities with disintegration.

As long as the Resident retained control over the detail of civil government, the administration of the Delhi Territory - though unconventional - worked remarkably well. This was primarily due to the character and ability of Seton who established the system of civil government in the Delhi Territory in the formative years between 1806 and 1810; and to Charles Metcalfe who carried on his work, adding to it many touches of his own boldness and originality. Yet in spite of the success of the Delhi administration, as evidenced by its steadily increasing revenue and the declining incidence of crime, it was inevitable that the time should come when the burden of government should prove too heavy for one individual to carry in addition to weighty political responsibilities; and thus at the end of Metcalfe's first residency in 1818, changes were made in the internal administration of the Delhi Territory which altered the whole character of its government.

The success of the " old Delhi system " as it existed until 1818 hinged upon the fact that responsibility at the highest level was wielded by two exceptionally able men. After 1818, the decision to separate the Resident's political responsibilities from his civil charge, and delegate his administrative duties first to a Commissioner and later to a Revenue Board, did not work out successfully. An experienced administrator such as

Fortescue found his position as Commissioner untenable; while a general laxity in administrative efficiency resulted from the constant bickerings of the three members of the Revenue Board. Government's remedy was to send Metcalfe back to Delhi as Resident with full responsibility for both political and civil administration; and this undivided responsibility was also accorded to the Residents who followed him between 1827 and 1832. The time had passed, however, when one man could deal adequately with the volume of revenue and judicial business which had developed at Delhi; and in 1832 Government attempted to solve the problem by creating a judge for the city and territory of Delhi and placing all judicial affairs under him, leaving political and revenue matters to be dealt with by the Agent and Commissioner.

The problem of delegating authority arose early in the development of civil administration at Delhi. While the volume of revenue, trade, and judicial business remained comparatively small, the Resident's Assistants were used in all sections of the administration; and not being responsible for any one department, they remained in fact what they were in name - the Resident's Assistants. By 1818, however, this arrangement was no longer possible; and after Metcalfe's departure, the Delhi Territory was divided for administrative purposes into districts, each one ^{the} in charge of a Principal Assistant responsible to the Commissioner or Resident for the actual working of all revenue, judicial, and police affairs

in his own area. This delegation of authority made the effective supervision of the Principal Assistants one of the most urgent concerns of the Residents, for only thus could they effectively co-ordinate administration throughout the Delhi Territory. When the central authority was weakest, as when the Delhi Territory was governed by the Board of Revenue, the Principal Assistants tended to become a law unto themselves; and general efficiency suffered in consequence.

It was at this point in its evolution that criticism against the method of civil government prevailing in the Delhi Territory raised its head. It came mainly from officers used to working the more stereotyped and formal enactments prescribed by the Bengal Code, who castigated the Delhi system in large measure because of the sins and omissions of the Board of Revenue. That Metcalfe vindicated the system of administration for which he was held to be mainly responsible was apparent from his second appointment as Resident at Delhi; but the criticism levied against the Delhi administration made more pertinent the question of introducing the Bengal Code into the Delhi Territory and bringing all its institutions into conformity with their counterparts in the Regulation Provinces. A beginning had already been made when the Delhi Customs System had been abolished; and its sayer, abkari, and town duties became subject to the Customs Code prevailing throughout Bengal. After 1827 when Metcalfe left Delhi, the agitation that the Delhi Territory should also conform in revenue and

judicial matters to rules in operation in the Bengal Presidency gathered momentum more especially as Bentinck was at that time introducing large scale administrative changes into Bengal. The answer came in 1832 with the abolition of the Delhi Residency, and the placing of the civil administration of the Delhi Territory under the ultimate jurisdiction of the Sadr Diwanni Adalat and the Sadr Nizamat Adalat at Allahabad.

Two years after the Delhi Residency came to an end, the Delhi Territory became part of the Province of Agra. An Agent with a limited political jurisdiction took his place at the court of the King, whose status and prestige continued to decline with the years. At Delhi, the Judge and the Commissioner dealt with local judicial and revenue matters, each responsible to the higher authorities at Allahabad. For all major purposes, the Delhi Territory had reached the stage when its civil administration resembled that of neighbouring districts across the Jumna. And yet, a difference persisted; for the Delhi Territory had affinities with the north-west regions of India rather than with Bengal, and the Bengal Regulations as such were never actually introduced there, though in 1832 provision was made for the Governor-General to introduce them by Resolution whenever he thought fit. In later years, the civil administration of the Delhi Territory became subject first to the Code of the North West Provinces, and later still to the Code of the Panjab. These later developments, however, fall outside the period covered by this thesis.

Chapter 1.

The Situation in North India in 1803.

The Delhi Territory came into being as a direct result of the capture of the city of Delhi by Lord Lake on 11th September 1803. This event was one of the outstanding British victories in the war against the Marathas in north India; and it brought under British influence and control large tracts of land in Hindustan hitherto under Maratha rule. It had also two other important consequences: it gave to the British Government possession of the person of the Mughul Emperor, Shah Alam; and it sounded the death-knell of any hopes France may have entertained of re-establishing a French dominion in north India.

Before discussing in some detail the territorial acquisitions of the British in the regions adjacent to the city of Delhi, it will be necessary to examine briefly the main factors of the situation as it existed in 1803 between the East India Company and the Maratha princes. Of the chieftains who constituted this confederacy at the beginning of the nineteenth century, it is Sindia and Holkar who figure most prominently in the history of the Delhi Territory.

With the Gaekwar of Baroda and the Raja of Berar, they stood out as leaders of the first rank among the semi-independent military chieftains who owed allegiance to the Peshwa at Poona.¹ For the greater part of the eighteenth century, this loosely-integrated and often discordant confederation had been the dominant power in central India. Their territories reached from Delhi and the Ganges in the north to Poona and the Tungabhadra in the south:² but by the end of the century, the confederacy showed signs of breaking up. The death of Nana Farnavis, the most statesmanlike of the Peshwa's ministers, and the disputed succession at Poona in which Holkar and Sindia supported rival peshwas, were signs of approaching dissolution. The climax came in December 1802 when the Peshwa finally placed himself and his throne under British protection, and concluded the Treaty of Bassein with the British authorities.

This treaty was the first step towards the establishment of British supremacy in India; for although the struggle with the chiefs of the confederation was still to come, it placed the head of the Marathas and all those who acknowledged his sovereignty in direct subordination to the East India Company.³ In this respect it was the logical outcome of a series of events extending from the

1. Thompson, E. "The making of the Princes of India." pp. 7-8
2. Roberts, P. E. "India under Wellesley." p. 26
3. Roberts, op. cit. pp. 187-193.

days of Clive and Warren Hastings. With the increase of⁴ British territory in India, more particularly in Oudh and Mysore, the British and Maratha boundaries had inevitably come into juxtaposition; and it only needed the advent of a Governor-General of the dynamic force of Lord Wellesley to bring the issue between the British and Maratha powers to a head.

Lord Wellesley had left England for India in 1798 at a time when the European situation could not but render him acutely conscious of the need for decisive action in India: for not only was Bonaparte threatening Europe with French domination, but he had opened the attack on the eastern possessions of Britain by his Egyptian Campaign. India lay⁵ within the orbit of his ambitions; and it was against this background of French scheming that Wellesley arrived to take up his charge in India, only to find French officers in command of the several armies of the Maratha princes, into whose forces they had introduced European discipline, weapons,⁶ and methods of warfare.

This was particularly true of Sindia's armies. Here, the greatest danger from French intrigue came from the lands near Delhi where General Perron, a Frenchman in command of Sindia's Brigades, had established what the Governor-General

4. Basu.P. "Relations between Oudh and the East India Company from 1785 - 1801." Ph.D.Thesis.1938.

5. Roberts. op. cit. p.30.

6. Compton. H. "A particular account of the European Military Adventurers of Hindostan from 1784-1803."p.249.

termed " an independent state of which Sindia's regular infantry may justly be termed the National Army." ⁷ A large, fertile tract of territory in the Ganges-Jumna Doab had been given to De Boigne, Perron's predecessor, by Sindia as a jaidad for the support of the troops which he commanded; and since De Boigne's retirement in 1796, Perron had held a similar position under Daulat Rao Sindia. Subject only to a nominal control by the Maratha prince, the Frenchman ruled and intrigued as he pleased. His authority was enforced by his troops; and the monopoly of the salt and customs duties together with the general administration of the revenues were entirely in his hands. He enjoyed the state and dignity of a sovereign, even issuing a coinage. His annual income, ⁸ according to Compton, was estimated at £1,632,000 sterling. Above all, as the master of Delhi, Perron had possession of the person of the Emperor Shah Alam, whose authority he was able to invoke for all his actions, and to whom he was always careful to give that outward subservience so dear to the heart of that aged but destitute monarch.

That Perron was planning to assign the territories he held in north India to the Government of France, and was awaiting the arrival in June 1803 of two hundred young French officers sent out to be the potential leaders of the French

7. Bengal Letters Received. 13th July. 1804. para. 15.

8. Compton. op.cit. pp. 248 - 250.

Army of Hindustan, was well-known to the Governor-General through whose vigilance the scheme came to naught. Wellesley saw to it that none of the French officers reached Delhi; but his discovery of Perron's intrigues brought home to him the necessity of getting rid of French power in the Doab. It also emphasised the importance of securing the custody of the Mughul. In a long, detailed despatch which he sent to the Directors on 13th July 1804, Wellesley showed how strongly the French menace had influenced his policy in north India. "The Mogul," he wrote, "has never been an important or dangerous instrument in the hands of the Marathas; but the augmentation of M. Perron's influence and power, and the growth of French influence in Hindustan have given a new aspect to the condition of the Mogul; and that unfortunate prince may become a powerful aid to the cause of the French in India under the direction of French agents."¹⁰

As the position of the Mughul is an integral factor in the history of the Delhi Territory, some further elucidation of Wellesley's statement is necessary. In 1803, Shah Alam, the ^{great} great grandson of Aurangzeb, was an old and a blind man. In his long life he had seen both the rise of the Marathas and the growth of the territorial power of the East India Company. He had succeeded to the throne of his fathers at a time when

9. Compton. op. cit. pp. 285 - 286.

10. In this despatch of 13th July, 1804, Wellesley reviews the whole of his policy in connection with the Marathas, the French, and the Mughul.

Bengal Letters Received. 13th July. 1804.

the Mughal Empire had virtually ceased to exist, and all that remained of its widespread territories were a few districts in the immediate neighbourhood of Delhi.¹¹

Even this small patrimony was not exempt from invasion, nor the Emperor's person from violence.¹² Maratha and Rohilla in turn became his masters once he had discarded the protection of the English and had placed himself in the hands of those who promised to restore him to the throne of Delhi.

Relations between Shah Alam and the East India Company date back to the days of Olive, when after the Battle of Baksar in 1764, the Emperor conferred the Diwani of Bengal upon the Company in return for an annual "tribute" of twenty-six lakhs of rupees to supply which the revenues of Kora and Allahabad were appropriated.¹³ Unable to resist the overtures of the Marathas to reinstate him in Delhi, Shah Alam parted company with the English in 1770, thus forfeiting both his income and the districts from which it was derived. At the end of fourteen years' uneasy rule in Delhi, in which he was little more than a prisoner in the hands of his protectors, Shah Alam was obliged at Sindia's dictation to confer the dignity of 'Mootlug' or supreme Deputy of the Empire upon the Peshwa,

11. Taylor, Meadows. "A Student's Manual of the History of India" p 451.

12. Shah Alam was blinded by Ghulam Qadir, the Rohilla in 1788 during a temporary eclipse of Sindia's power.

13. Roberts, P.E. "The History of India under the Company and the Crown" p 61.

while Sindia himself became deputy executive minister with
 14
 command of the Imperial Army. After rescuing the blinded
 Emperor from the outrages of Ghulam Qadir in 1780, Sindia
 steadily consolidated his position. The Mughul was power-
 less; though Sindia permitted him to retain some outward
 semblance of imperial dignity, allowing for his support a
 small pension or stipend derived from the revenues of his
 hereditary possessions in and around the city of Delhi.

During the last decades of the eighteenth century, Sindia
 had also brought under his control most of the native chiefs
 of north India; and in his name, Perron exercised authority
 over the Subas of Saharunpur, Panipat, Delhi, Narnol, Agra
 and Ajmer; and even received tribute from the Rajas of
 Jaipur and Jodhpur. Many of the lesser Rajput Chiefs and
 the Sikhs dwelling between the Sutlej and the Jumna also
 15
 acknowledged his authority. This wide jurisdiction was
 only effective when Sindia's power could be upheld by his
 well-disciplined brigades; yet even when this control was
 fully operative neither Sindia nor Perron claimed to rule
 save as the executive officers of Shah Alam, just as in
 earlier years the Company had ruled in Bengal as the
 Emperor's Diwan. This dual aspect of authority, the
 nominal and the actual, never clearly defined, was to be

14. Taylor, Meadows. op. cit. p.509.

15. Compton. op. cit. p.248.

a source of friction all through the history of the Delhi Territory. From the first it was inherent in the situation created when those possessing power acknowledged as titular sovereign one who was completely under their control.

Though in the eyes of the native peoples of India Shah Alam was their lawful ruler and the only power who could confer honours and bestow titles,¹⁶ to the British his pretensions to royal honours and the ceremonial so punctiliously observed at his court were but the pageantry of a play out-worn. Yet it is significant that it was not until 1815, many years after the Mughul had accepted the British authority, that the nations of Europe recognised the British as the sovereign power in India and ceased to regard them as officers ruling in the name of the Mughul Emperor.¹⁷

In this connection, the Treaty of Bassein was important; for it placed the Peshwa, the supreme deputy of the Mughul Emperor, in subordinate alliance to the British power. It also galvanised into active opposition the Maratha princes who were desirous of challenging so far-reaching a claim. The Gaekwar of Baroda had already made his peace with the British; and Holkar, unable to settle his differences with Sindia, held aloof biding his time.¹⁸ Sindia and the Raja of Berar met to plan common action against the British;

16. Wellesley's Despatch of 13th July. 1804. para. 68.

Bengal Letters Received.

17. "Cambridge Shorter History of India." p. 684.

18. Roberts. P.E. "India under Wellesley." p. 211.

and Wellesley, realising that the time had come to bring matters to a decisive conclusion, required the two Maratha princes to separate and retire within their own borders. When this ultimatum was refused, war became inevitable.¹⁹

Events in the south in connection with Berar are outside the scope of this thesis; but in north India, Wellesley's determination to oust the Maratha power "from the lands north of the Chambal" had far-reaching consequences for the future of the Delhi Territory. It was Wellesley's aim, not only to rid Hindustan of the French and gain possession of the person of the Mughal but also to round off the frontier of British Territory in the north-west along the line of the Jumna. To achieve this object, the annexation of Perron's lands in the Doab was essential. Wellesley had no wish to extend British territory further, though he was anxious that the lands beyond the Jumna should be in friendly relationship to the British power so that they could be rallied to meet any hostile threat from a French invasion through Afghanistan or the Punjab.²⁰ The capture of Delhi with its adjacent forts and the custody of the Mughal were vital to his plans; but his despatch showed how much he desired that the British should enter Delhi

19. Wellesley's Despatch of 13th July 1804 §6
Bengal Letters Received.

20. Instructions of the Governor-General to the Commander-in-Chief dated 27th July 1803, Quoted in Wellesley's Despatch of 13th July 1804 §302 et. seq.

as the protectors and deliverers of Shah Alam rather than as his adversaries.

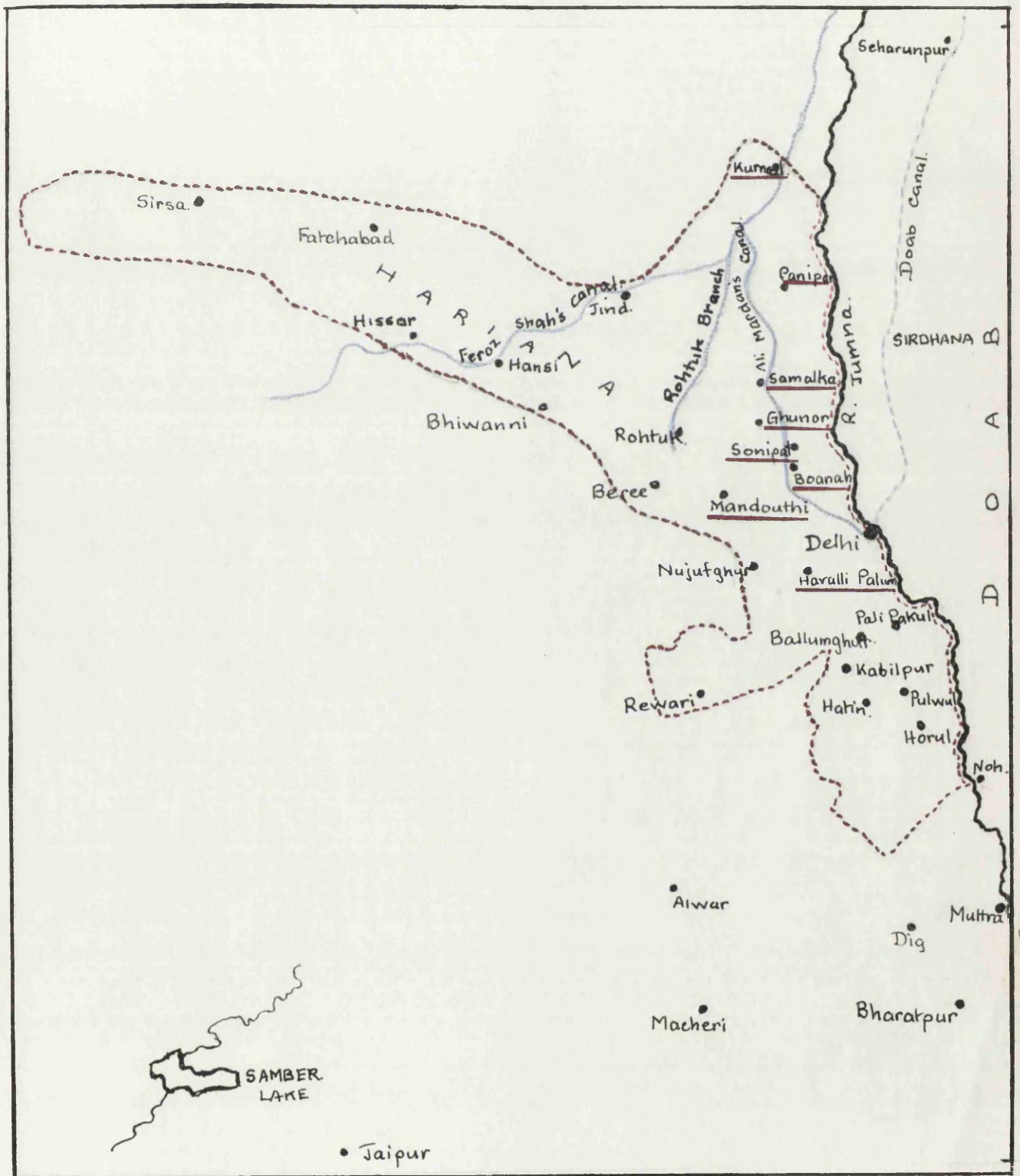
Before battle was actually joined with Sindia in August 1803, Wellesley had encouraged Perron to desert his master and had made it easy for him to pass unmolested through the British lines to Lucknow. The command of Delhi and the Doab fortresses thus fell to Bourgoin, a less capable and a less scrupulous commander than Perron. Wellesley had also taken the wise step of issuing a proclamation to all European officers in Sindia's armed brigades offering them service with the British forces in the coming struggle and promising compensation for any loss of territory or fortune they might incur. Both measures were largely successful. Delhi would have put up a much more stubborn resistance to Lord Lake than it did had Perron been in command; while Sindia's brigades were seriously depleted by the loss of many European officers who took advantage of the British offer and by many native chieftains who were anxious to join hands with the British power.

Lord Lake's campaign in north India in the winter of 1803 ended with Delhi and the Doab fortresses of Koel, Aligarh, Muttra, and Agra in British hands; and peace was made with Sindia at the Treaty of Serji Argengau on 29th December.

On writing to the Directors, Wellesley claimed that all²¹
the main objects of the campaign had been achieved:
the Maratha power in north India had been broken, and
with it had gone the hope of a revival of French power
in Hindustan; all Sindia's lands north of the River Chambal
were ceded to the British who inherited with them his wide
jurisdiction over the Rajput and Sikh chiefs beyond the
Jumna; while in Delhi, the aged Mughul Emperor welcomed the
British as his protectors. Thus the stage was set for a
new era of British rule and influence in Hindustan.

21. Wellesley's Despatch of 13th July. 1804. paras 32 - 79.
Bengal Letters Received.

THE DELHI TERRITORY.



----- Boundary of the Delhi Territory at its fullest extent.
 The eight original parganas underlined in red.

Chapter 2

The Settlement and Administration of the Delhi Territory under Lieutenant Colonel David Ochterlony. 1803--1806.

On 16th September, 1803, a few days after the capture of Delhi and the conclusion of the Treaty of Serji Argengaum, the Commander-in-Chief and his Staff were received by Shah Alam in the hall of audience in the palace at Delhi. The aged Emperor greeted Lord Lake as his friend and deliverer; and accorded him every mark of welcome and honour.²² Shortly afterwards, their immediate task completed, the Commander-in-Chief and the Army quitted Delhi; leaving all matters relating to the royal family and the administration of the lands ceded by Sindia to the Resident. According to the terms of the treaty, this officer was to be the official representative of the British Government at the Mughul's court; and pending the arrival of Colonel Scott from Lucknow to take up this post at Delhi, Lord Lake deputed one of his officers-Lieutenant Colonel David Ochterlony- to take temporary charge of the Delhi Residency.²³ The death of Colonel Scott before he could reach Delhi²⁴ led to the

22. Bengal Secret Consultations. 17th September. 1803. Lord Lake to Wellesley.

23. Boards Collections No 4432. Letter dated 12th April 1804 par. 579.

24. Bengal Political Consultations. 1st October. 1804.

permanent appointment of Ochterlony²⁵ on whom, as the first Resident at Delhi, devolved the difficult task of bringing order out of chaos in the tumultuous years after 1803.

Ochterlony was a soldier; and as such had little knowledge or experience of the Company's Regulations.²⁶ During the three years of his Residency at Delhi, he had constantly to deal with situations for which there was no precedent; and he frequently took a soldier's line of action and settled matters directly on the spot. He disliked writing long reports and keeping detailed accounts; and he reduced his official correspondence with the authorities at Calcutta to a minimum.²⁷ Many years later recalling his early experience at Delhi, he wrote,²⁸ "My attention was engaged by duties as important as they were various; and for a short time embraced military, political, and revenue departments, in all of which I was frequently without instructions, compelled to act on the emergency of the moment-----according to the best of my judgment, in some cases where I had not the benefit of the least previous experience."

25. Bengal Secret Consultations. 29th Nov. 1804. No 299

26. Board's Collections No 4432. 22nd Oct. 1804.

27. A fact which partly accounts for the paucity of the official records dealing with these years.

28. Ludhiana Agency Records. pp. 432-433.
Ochterlony to Swinton, 8th April 1815.

During Ochterlony's first year of office, the situation at Delhi was certainly unprecedented. He found himself obliged to defend a city attacked by insurgent armies for the second time within a year; maintain order within Delhi and in the districts immediately surrounding the city; and in the political sphere, advise the Governor-General as to the most suitable provision to be made for the Mughul Emperor and his family. This question, together with the general settlement and apportionment of the lands formerly held by Sindia, were matters of high policy decided by Lord Wellesley and his Council at Fort William and by the Court of Directors in London: but Delhi was the centre from which all such decisions were put into effect; and to Ochterlony as Resident, and to Lord Lake who was appointed to deal with the surrounding chiefs and jagirdars, fell the task of executing Government's plans.

Sindia's overlordship had extended as far as the Sikh chiefs whose lands bordered the Sutlej in the north-west, and to the rulers of the Rajput states to the south and west of Delhi. By many of these chiefs, Sindia's authority was acknowledged only when his brigades were at hand to enforce submission: at other times, the Rajput and Sikh rulers were virtually independent.

In 1803, it had been decided that the Jumna should be the western boundary of the Company's possessions in north India. Perron's jaidad in the Doab was to be incorporated in the Bengal Presidency as the Ceded and Conquered Provinces, while regions to the west of the Jumna were to be allocated to those who possessed territorial claims on the Indian Government. Chief of these was the Mughul Emperor; and it was Ochterlony's most important task to implement the arrangements proposed by Lord Wellesley for the fulfilment of the pledge given to Shah Alam in 1803.

For his guidance in this matter, Government laid down certain fundamental principles to which the Resident was to adhere. Every mark of outward respect and consideration was to be paid to the Mughul Emperor - or the King of Delhi as he was henceforth to be known - but it was not Government's intention to leave him with any real power save within a very limited sphere. His relation to the British Government was to be one of dependence.²⁹ On the other hand, the Company had no wish to take over any imperial jurisdiction which Shah Alam might be deemed to possess over those Indian princes who had formerly owed allegiance to the Mughul Emperor. As Wellesley pointed out,³⁰ the British authorities were only concerned to prevent the

29. Board's Collections 4432. 16th Nov. 1804.
Edmonstone to Directors. para.3

30. Wellesley's Despatch of 13th July 1804. para.73.

French from using the person and name of Shah Alam for their subversive schemes.

At no time was there any question of the Governor-General concluding a treaty with Shah Alam in writing.³¹ The British assumed the right to lay down the conditions considered necessary for the protection and provision of the King of Delhi, and he had no option but to acquiesce: but Government's insistence that all outward marks of deference should be paid to Shah Alam as to a great potentate, and their meticulous observance of the ancient forms of courtly ceremony at Delhi, established a situation at variance with the real facts. It was to prove a source of friction and discontent destined to clog relations between Government and the King of Delhi in the years ahead, and to render the task of the Resident one of extreme delicacy.

In view of the long controversy between the British Government and the King of Delhi which dates from the settlement finally concluded with Shah Alam in May 1805, it is necessary to examine closely Government's original proposals. Wellesley had already considered carefully the nature of the jurisdiction to be established at Delhi when he sent his proposals to Ochterlony at the end of 1804.³²

31. Board's Collections 4432. Notes of Instructions to the Resident at Delhi. para. 20.

32. "Notes of Instructions to the Resident at Delhi". 16th Nov. 1804, para.5-Board's Collections. 4432.

The Governor - General had decided against the establishment of a separate, dependent native state under the suzerainty of Shah Alam on the one hand; but alternatively, he did not think that it was desirable to place the Delhi Territory under direct British control and incorporate it as part of the Bengal Presidency. He wished rather "to blend the two preceding modes of provision;" and he suggested a compromise in which the nominal authority of the King of Delhi should be balanced by the actual power wielded by the British. These tentative proposals were embodied in a document entitled "Notes of Instructions to the Resident at Delhi" dated 16th November, 1804, and Ochterlony was asked to give his considered opinion on them. In essence Lord Wellesley proposed that a tract of territory near Delhi on the western side of the Jumna should be assigned for the support of the King of Delhi and his dependants, the extent of such lands to be in some measure determined by the amount of revenue they could produce, and the sum likely to be required "to constitute an ample provision for the dignity and comfort of His Majesty and the royal family." It is to this initial proposal that the Delhi Territory owes its origin.

The Governor - General suggested that the assigned lands should be administered in the name of the king of Delhi, but should for all effective purposes be under the control of the Resident; and this tread of compromise ran throughout the detailed proposals which followed. The King was to appoint an amil, or revenue officer; but the appointment was to be made " at the express recommendation of the British Government:"³³ and collectors of customs duties and police officers in the city of Delhi were likewise "to be appointed with the express concurrence of the Resident," though the Resident was not to interfere with the executive duties of any of these officials except by his advice and recommendation.³⁴ Civil and criminal justice was to be administered in the name of Shah Alam; but the courts were to be under the superintendence of the Resident who was to see that justice was administered according to Muhammadan law. The "Notes of Instructions " concluded with a request that Ochterlony should send to Fort William, as speedily as possible, a statement of those territories on the right bank of the Jumna which, in his view, should be assigned for the upkeep of the royal household, with an estimate of the revenue they had produced during recent years. The Resident was also

33. Notes of Instructions to the Resident at Delhi para.11

34. Ibid. para.12

asked to furnish information of the income given to the Mughul Emperor in the days of the Marathas, naming any territories on the western side of the Jumna which had been assigned for that purpose. Finally, it was intimated to the Resident that the proposals made by the Governor - General were tentative, and that due consideration would be given to Ochterlony's observations based on the actual state of affairs in Delhi.

Ochterlony was not slow to reply.³⁵ During his fourteen months at Delhi, he had seen sufficient of the disorder and corruption in the city to have definite views as to the necessary measures to be introduced. He disliked the dual control proposed by the Governor - General; and he strongly urged that instead of giving Shah Alam so large a measure of authority in the lands to be assigned for his support, the Resident's power over the administration of revenue and justice should be unfettered. As a means to this end he proposed that, instead of the King appointing an amil to collect his revenues, provision should be made for his needs by means of "a fixed stipend payable in ready money from the treasury at Delhi:" for only thus, "would the controlling power intended to be vested in the Resident prevent much oppression in the parganas and exorbitant taxation in the city."

35. Board's Collections 4452. Ochterlony to Wellesley
30th Nov. 1804.

In support of his plea, Ochterlony stated that "His Majesty's helpless state, his age, and infirmities" had long since rendered him unfit to exercise authority: " and there are many reasons, independent of weakness of mind," he added, "which strike me as rendering it unsafe to grant it to the heir apparent."³⁶ Should he be allowed to retain the management of the lands at present under his charge on the western side of the Jumna, Ochterlony thought that the best means of realising the revenue from them under present circumstances would be to let them in farm for a period of five years. With regard to the courts of justice to be established in the King's name, Ochterlony thought that this would be highly pleasing to Shah Alam: but he added, "Such is my opinion of the palace, that I would beg leave to recommend that the salaries of the officers should be fixed by Government and paid by their representative;" and that no sentence of death should be executed without the express sanction of the King.³⁷

Ochterlony had some difficulty in collecting information concerning the lands which had been set aside for the King's support under the Marathas; and his reply to the Governor - General on this matter is the only existing record of the disposition of lands and jagirs as they were in the last years of Maratha Supremacy in north India.³⁷

36. Boards Collections 4432. Ochterlony to Wellesley. 30th Nov. 1804

37. Ibid Schedules attached to Ochterlony's letter to Edmonstone dated 30th November. 1804 (see App. 1-4)

So far as he could ascertain, few lands on the western side of the Jumna had been set aside for the royal family; but in the Doab, certain lands in the Suba of Shah Jehanabad, known as "The King's Jagire," were so assigned.³⁸ In the year prior to the establishment of British rule in Delhi, these lands were producing a revenue of nearly twelve lakhs of rupees; but, in spite of this, Ochterlony had previously reported³⁹ that at the time of the British entry into Delhi, the royal family had been in "a state of indigence and misery." This was due to the fact that the original allowance allowed to Shah Alam by Sindia had been reduced to Rs.53,000 a month; and of this sum, only Rs. 17,000 had been at the King's disposal for his own use. The remainder had been set aside for the payment of the two battalions of najibs who guarded the palace and the city; and it also served as a fund from which a pittance was provided for the Salatin - the numerous collateral descendants of the royal house of Delhi who lived in seclusion within the precincts of the palace. Except for the heir apparent and other children of the reigning sovereign, this unfortunate body of men, women, and children lived in a state of dire poverty, no one of them receiving more than twenty or twenty-five rupees a month.

In the light of this information, Ochterlony proposed that

38. Board's Collections 4432. Shedule 1 attached to Ochterlony's letter of 30th November 1804
(APP.1)

39. Ibid. letter dated 12th April. 1804.

the King's income from the British should approximate to the sum originally allowed by Sindia; and that the King should receive one lakh of rupees each month together with the customary gifts of ten thousand rupees presented at the seven great Muhammadan festivals. He also suggested that additional allowances amounting to thirty thousand rupees a month should be paid to the heir apparent and other members of the royal family who, in return, should relinquish their estates in the Doab. These sums, amounting in all to Rs.16,30,000, would, in Ochterlony's opinion, give ample provision for the needs of the King and his household; and the Resident believed that Shah Alam would view the proposed stipend as sufficient compensation for any possessions he may once have enjoyed.

As a source of revenue for the King's stipend, Ochterlony suggested that the lands under his management on the west bank of the Jumna, ⁴¹ together with Rewari and the neighbouring ⁴² parganas forfeited by the Raja of Bharatpur, should be set aside. He thought that these lands were capable of great development; and if they were not alienated as jagirs, he estimated that they should produce an annual revenue ⁴³ of Rs.14,85,500.

0. Board's Collections 4432 Ochterlony to Edmonstone. 30th Nov. 1804.
1. Ibid. Schedule 3 (see App. 2)
2. Ibid. " (see App. 3)
3. Board's Collections 4432 Ochterlony to Edmonstone. 30th Nov. 1804.

Ochterlony's information carried due weight: and in reply some months later, the Governor - General modified his original proposals to meet the Resident's suggestions. Lord Wellesley's final decision was communicated in a despatch dated 23rd May 1805⁴⁴ and it was this document which finally laid down the general character and extent of the Delhi Territory. Ochterlony had carried his main point; for though the assigned lands were to be administered in the name of Shah Alam, all power was actually vested in the Resident, who was to be responsible for the collection of revenue, the administration of justice, and the maintenance of order. All native officials were to hold their appointment from him; and save within the actual precincts of the palace at Delhi, the King had no power to interfere with the arrangements made in his name. It is true that Shah Alam was permitted to appoint a diwan to attend at the offices of revenue collection so that the King might be directly informed of the amount of revenue collected; but this right was never exercised by Shah Alam or his successors.⁴⁵ Courts of criminal and civil justice were to be set up at Delhi in the King's name, and no one was to be put to death without his sanction; but the Indian law officers were to be carefully selected by the Resident, and Muhammadan law was

44. Bengal Secret Consultations 2nd June.1805. No.8

45. (Though his son Akbar II, revived it some twenty years later.)

to be modified so that all sentences entailing mutilation were to be commuted for terms of imprisonment. All salaries, from the King's stipend to that of the najibs who guarded his palace, were to be paid from the Resident's treasury: and finally, to aid the Resident in superintending the collection of revenue and administering justice, a covenanted servant of the Company was to be appointed as his assistant. Such was the framework on which the administrative system of the Delhi Territory was to be built.

Though Ochterlony had convinced the Governor - General that the effective controlling power of the newly-formed territory should remain in the hands of the Resident, his suggestions regarding the amount of the King's stipend and the lands from which such revenue could be produced did not meet with the same approval. The Governor - General agreed to the principle of a fixed stipend payable from the Delhi treasury; but he reduced the amount to Rs.10,80,000 a year exclusive of the Rs.10,000 presented to the King at the seven great festivals. Likewise, the lands assigned for the King's support were considerably curtailed. They comprised a relatively small area consisting of territories on the western side of the Jumna which lay north-west of a village called Kabilpur near Ballumgarh, other arrangements being

TERRITORIES SURROUNDING DELHI.



----- Western boundary of British conquests as shown on
A. Arrowsmith's Map 1804.

made for the lands in the Doab and in the south-east which were incorporated into the collectorships of Agra, Aligarh,⁴⁶ and Seharunpur.

Ochterlony eventually succeeded in defining the lands which were to comprise the Delhi Territory after he had managed to borrow a map from Archibald Seton, the judge at Bareilly.⁴⁷ Excluding those tracts of territory which had⁴⁸ already been granted to native chiefs, the parganas to comprise the Delhi Territory were the eleven mahals of Karnal, Panipat, Sonipat, Ghunor, Samalka, Pali Pakul,⁴⁹ Najafghar, Allaverdi, Mandouthi, Boanah, and Havalli Palum; and these lands in 1805 were producing a revenue of only⁵⁰ Rs. 2,70,500.

46. Bengal Secret Consultations. 2nd June.1805.No.8.

47. Board's Collections.4432. Ochterlony to Wellesley.15th.June.1805.

48. Bengal Secret Consultations.12th Sept.1805.No.138.(see App.4-)

49. There is no map extant giving the exact boundaries of the Delhi Territory in 1805. A map dated 1804 compiled by A. Arrowsmith, Hydrographer to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales shows the western boundary of the lands conquered by the British in north India. Of this area, which extended to the Sutlej and to Bikaner, the Delhi Territory formed only a small part. Allowing for the lands given as jagirs or jaidads, there was a large area in Rajputana which the Governor-General in Council preferred to ignore until such time as events served to remind him that this hinterland lay within the nominal jurisdiction of the British Government. (vide infra ch.3) In Griffiths "Rajahs of the Punjab"p.80 the lands ceded by Sindia in this area are given as Sirsa, Hissar, Rohtak, Delhi, Gurgaon, and Agra, though the author adds that the first three named territories were not taken under British administration until 1809.

50. Board's Collections 4432. Ochterlony to Wellesley.15th June.1805.

This was little more than a quarter of the King's stipend; and Ochterlony pointed out that it would be necessary to remit sums from the treasuries of other collectorships for payment of the royal stipend.

Under such an arrangement, it was obviously not the intention of the Governor-General in Council that the King's stipend should be entirely dependent upon the resources of the assigned lands- for even were the revenue of the lands held as jagirs to revert to the Delhi Territory, the total revenue would only amount to Rs.9,10,500 a year. To meet any disappointment which Shah Alam might be expected to feel at the restricted area of the assigned lands, Wellesley authorised the Resident to state that the arrangements laid down in May 1805 could be regarded as temporary and due to the " state of our resources under the immediate pressure of the exigencies of war."⁵¹ The Governor-General's despatch also declared that "he would be disposed to augment that provision when those exigencies shall cease to exist." It was upon this intimation that the royal family was to base its claim to an increased provision after the death of Shah Alam; but while the old king lived, little change was made in the royal stipend. It was found to be more convenient to commute the sums given to the King at the principal religious

51. Bengal Secret Consultations, 2nd June 1805. No.8.

festivals for a monthly sum of six thousand rupees, and there were various minor alterations in the allowances to the King's children. Otherwise the main provision remained unchanged until the accession of Akbar II in 1806.

The impression left from a perusal of the records is not that the British Government acted parsimoniously in assigning so small a territory for the support of the royal family of Delhi, as that their hands were forced by the circumstances of the time. Most significant of these were the invasion of the assigned lands and the Doab by Holkar and the Sikh chiefs in 1804; and Government's need to meet its treaty obligations to restore to Sindia's chiefs their hereditary estates many of which lay within the Delhi Territory. In September 1804, the Sikh chiefs whose lands lay between the Sutlej and Jumna rivers made common cause with Holkar and Amir Khan. They invaded the Doab,⁵² carried off large numbers of cattle, and captured and burnt Seharanpur: but for the timely aid of the Begam Samru, Guthrie the Collector would have fared badly.⁵³ At the same time Holkar, aided by the Raja of Bharatpur, crossed the Chambal and advanced on Delhi. On 8th October he laid siege to the city which was defended by Ochterlony and Lt.Col.Burns. Holkar with-

52. Bengal Revenue Consultations, Ceded & Conquered Provinces
Guthrie to Lake, 10th Sept.1804.

53. Ibid 3rd Nov. 1804.

drew his forces at the approach of a British contingent under Lord Lake; but he was over-taken and defeated at Farrukhabad, and his power was finally broken at the Battle of Dig on 13th November 1804.⁵⁴

It was not surprising that these incursions had disastrous effects on the amount of revenue collected in the Delhi Territory and the Doab; and that at this juncture, the lands on both sides of the Jumna were a heavy liability on the Company's resources. In the Delhi Territory, the situation was further aggravated because large areas had been set aside⁵⁵ as jagirs for Sindia's chiefs and relatives. Government found that this was the most economic way of meeting its treaty obligations. By the grant of a jagir or estate, the jagirdar received the right to collect revenue from the lands he held; and he was completely responsible for their management and control. It was a life-tenure; and when the jagirdar died, his lands reverted to Government. In this way, large tracts of territory on the western bank of the Jumna were alienated from the Delhi Territory during the early years of its existence. They formed enclaves within the assigned lands; and being independent of the Resident's control, added greatly to the problems of administration. Only gradually,

54. Bengal Letters Received. 1st March 1805. paras. 93--109.

55. Ibid. 13th July. 1804. para. 43.

as jagirdars died, did their estates revert to Government;
 56
 and come under the general system of administration.

In the Doab, Government pursued a different policy. From the first, it had been decided that the conquered provinces between the Jumna and the Ganges should be incorporated into the Bengal Presidency and be administered according to the regulations by which the Company's older provinces were
 57
 governed. Consequently few jagirs were granted in this area, as the administrative powers enjoyed by jagirdars would have conflicted with Government's regulations. Furthermore, Government decided that existing jagirs in the Doab should be exchanged for estates of equal value on the western side of
 58
 the Jumna; or be relinquished for an annual sum, as in the
 59
 case of the heir apparent's jagir. As part of this re-organisation of territory in the Doab, Ochterlony was asked to relinquish charge of two districts on the left bank of the Jumna adjacent to Delhi, and hand them over to the Collectors
 60
 of Saharunpur and Aligarh. These officers had been appointed by Government in order that they might introduce into the conquered provinces of the Doab the Company's system
 61
 of revenue assessment, police, and judicial courts: and

56. Vide infra chapter 3. p.76.

57. Bengal Secret Consultations. 2nd March.1804.No.8.

58. The Begam Samru was allowed to retain Sirdhana in the northern Doab but was obliged to exchange her territories in the south.

Bengal Letters Received.31st December.1804.para 34.

59. Bengal Secret Consultations. 31st January.1805.No.226.

60. Bengal Revenue Consultations. C & C.P. 26th June.1805. Ochterlony to Russell.

61. Regulation Vlll of 1805.

when more settled conditions were established after the incursions of Holkar, they proceeded to their posts.

On the western bank of the Jumna no such settlement was attempted, the Governor-General in Council deciding that the peculiar circumstances of Delhi did not warrant its coming within the administrative system governed by the Company's Regulations.⁶² One of Ochterlony's first tasks in Delhi was to reduce to some settled order the confusion which existed in the city's monetary and trading usages. He appointed a muhassil or inspector to check the weights used in trading, and he endeavoured to standardise the city's coinage.⁶³ This he found to be "in a state of utmost confusion;" to remedy which he called in the French or Halle rupees coined by Perron, and re-issued a new coinage in the name of Shah Alam embossed with the British lion instead of the fleur-de-lys. The aged king could not be persuaded that the animal stamped on the coin was not a hog;

62. (This meant that within the area under his charge, the Resident was given a relatively free hand to establish a settled administration. It was assumed that he would make such arrangements for the collection of revenue and the administration of justice as were in accordance with the Regulations laid down for the Company's older provinces; but though all his enactments were subject to the sanction of the Governor-General in Council, the Resident was not bound by the details of the Regulation Code.)

63 Bengal Secret Consultations 24th Sept. 1804.No.214.(This gives Ochterlony's diary of his first six months of office at Delhi.)

and to quieten the king's mind, Ochterlony withdrew the offending issue of rupees and promised that the lion should be replaced by a rose. "The whole, however, convinces me of the imbecility of the king," Ochterlony wrote in his diary, "and his great joy at my acquiescence convinces me how very little his wishes have been attended to."

64

His next task was to begin the collection of revenue. In the disordered state of the country, revenue collection was difficult; and the system of tax-farming as it had existed under the Marathas seemed to Ochterlony the easiest means of realising revenue which was urgently needed. He had neither the knowledge necessary to attempt a formal land settlement, nor the inclination to do so, and whenever the Governor-General in Council pressed for a more regularised system of land assessment and revenue collection, the Resident pleaded the disorganised condition of the country and his own ignorance of the detail of revenue administration as sufficient reason for delay. "I feel myself shackled by any regulations," he wrote.⁶⁵ "All I can promise to do is what I have hitherto done, my utmost to realise the rents due to Government on a fair and moderate assessment, and to avoid or punish any act of oppression." Accordingly in May 1805, he received instructions

64. Bengal Secret Consultations 26th Sept. 1803. No. 226.

65. Ibid. 22nd Oct. 1804. Ochterlony to Lake.

to farm out the land for a period of three years,⁶⁶ and he was promised the services of an assistant who would take over the detailed work of revenue administration and be known formally as the "Superintendent of the Revenues." The first officer to hold the post was William Spedding, who arrived in Delhi to take up his duties on 7th November 1805,⁶⁷ not many months before the end of Ochterlony's term of office.

Thus revenue administration under Ochterlony was little more than an improved system of tax-farming, unsatisfactory though it was acknowledged to be. Under the Marathas, when troops were always available to enforce collection, the farmer of taxes paid a specified sum to the Government and was then given the right to exact the land tax from the area he held in farm.⁶⁸ Land revenue was assessed in a rough and ready fashion according to the appearance of the crops on the ground; and though the proportion of tax varied in different parganas, the usual rate of assessment was one third upon the kharif or autumn crop and two thirds upon the rabi or spring harvest. The system obviously lent itself to extortion, as when Begam Samru in her Doab lands exacted impositions so rigorously that the cultivators were obliged to sell their cattle and farming implements to satisfy her

66. Instructions to the Resident, 23rd May. 1805. para 4
Board's Collections. 4432.

67. Bengal Political Consultations. 26th Nov. 1805. No7

68. Bengal Revenue Consultations. C.C.P. 16th March. 1804. § 3.

demands, with the result that their lands were deserted and left waste.⁶⁹ A similar state of affairs existed within the Delhi Territory. On his arrival at Delhi, Spedding reported that the system of extortion pursued by former governments naturally led the people to resist the demands of the British unless they could be enforced by superior military strength. Revenue collection thus became " a sort of continued warfare" in which crops were frequently destroyed and whole villages deserted.

Hardly less objectionable was another method of revenue collection which persisted in parts of the assigned lands. This was a system inherited from the Marathas and known as "amani". Under it, an official called an amil was invested with the responsibility both of collecting revenue and administering justice. His salary was usually small; though the office was everywhere coveted because its perquisites rendered it a position of great emolument.⁷⁰ As it was the duty of an amil to preserve order in the parganas under his authority, he always had the necessary armed strength to enforce his demands.⁷¹ The system continued longest in jagirs which were outside the authority and control of the Resident.

By the time Spedding took charge of the revenues of the

69. Bengal Revenue Consultations. C & C.P. 16th March. 1804 §§7&8

70. Ibid. §2.

71. Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations. 6th March. 1806. No.9

Delhi Territory, a great many more lands had been granted as jagirs by Lord Lake to various claimants. Of the original eleven mahals, only eight remained to supply revenue for the upkeep of the royal household - namely, Havalli Palum, Panipat, Sonipat, Samalka, Ghunor, Karnal, Boanah and Mandouthi. In 1805 they were producing a revenue of only Rs 1,07,000; though Spedding pointed out that many villages in the turbulent northern provinces had still to be brought into subjection. Of these, Karnal had only been under British control for one year; while Boanah and Mandouthi had as yet contributed no revenue, being still in a state of complete insubordination.⁷²

The appointment of Spedding as Superintendant of the Revenue was the first step in the devolution of authority which hitherto had been concentrated in the hands of the Resident. Ochterlony was conscious of this, and was anxious that the Governor-General in Council should define the relative duties of the Resident and his Assistant. Ochterlony suggested that Spedding should have under his control all matters relating to revenue; and in particular, he should be responsible for the collection and recording of all land revenue and of all other taxes including customs and town dues.⁷³ In all these matters, however, he should be subject

72. Bengal Political Consultations. 26th Dec. 1805. No.18

73. Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations 6th March. 1806.No.9

to the general authority of the Resident without whose sanction no tax should be abolished nor any new duty imposed. The Governor-General in Council was in complete agreement;⁷⁴ and it was upon this basis that the administration of revenue in the Delhi Territory was established.

Closely allied with the collection of revenue was the administration of justice and the establishment of an adequate police. Neither Ochterlony nor his immediate successor Archibald Seton, found it practicable to make any material alteration in the courts of civil and criminal justice established in accordance with the settlement of 23rd May 1805; although Ochterlony received many requests from the Governor-General in Council to bring them into line with the judicial courts of the Regulation Provinces. It was not until he was about to leave Delhi that Ochterlony presented any suggestions for the better regulation of justice in Delhi. He thought it essential that the courts should remain under the Resident's jurisdiction; but he considered it necessary to delegate the hearing of inferior or petty suits to his newly-appointed Assistant, William Fraser; and to set aside certain days of the week for judicial business. He also appended a list of writers, pleaders, and other functionaries attached to the civil and criminal courts of Delhi.⁷⁵ These

74. Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations. 6th March. 1806. No. 12

75. " " " " " " " " " " No. 9

establishments were duly sanctioned; and authority was given for Fraser to officiate in the judicial department. Ochterlony also tried to get a ruling from the Governor-General in Council as to how far native rulers and jagirdars, whose lands intersected those of the Delhi Territory, were subject to the jurisdiction of the Delhi courts; but he did not succeed in getting a definite answer. The principle was laid down, however, that all persons holding lands within the boundaries of the Delhi Territory were to be treated "in every respect in the capacity of subjects," and as such were to be amenable to the established courts of justice. Exception was made only in the case of the royal family of Delhi.

In connection with the establishment of an effective police force, Ochterlony was mainly concerned with maintaining order in the city of Delhi and its immediate vicinity. As so large an area of the assigned lands was either in the hands of jagirdars or under the authority of amils, who possessed sufficient forces to protect travellers and deal with robberies within their own borders, the Resident felt it to be his first duty to restore order at his own gates. Two years' residence at Delhi had driven him to the conclusion that a semi-military force was necessary to cope with the corrupt morals of the city and also with the tribe of Gojur robbers

who infested the neighbouring countryside. To this end, he proposed to form a battalion of najibs from the officers and men who had helped to defend Delhi when it was besieged by Holkar, and he suggested that in addition to their police duties, the najibs could be available to serve as escorts either for individuals or for military convoys, or they could be used as additional night-guards on the city walls.⁷⁶ The Governor-General in Council raised no objection to the maintenance of so large a force;⁷⁷ realising that in an area where many still disclaimed the authority of Government, and where ancient animosities flared forth often on trivial pretexts, a body of trained men who could quell disturbances and restore order was a necessity of government.

On one matter of importance however, Ochterlony's advice was set aside because it ran counter to the declared policy of Government. In November 1804, he raised the question of the defence of the newly-acquired territories; and suggested that the Doab lands and the Delhi Territory could most easily be protected if the regions to the west, as far as the Sutlej, were annexed to the British dominions.⁷⁸ The lands Ochterlony had in mind belonged to the Sikhs of the Cis-Sutlej area,

76. Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations 27th Nov. 1805.

77. Ibid. 12th Dec. 1805.

78. Bengal Secret Consultations. 17th Nov. 1804.

and the possible aggressor was Raja Ranjit Singh of Lahore. This proposal produced a formal declaration of policy from Wellesley that any further extension of territory to the west of Delhi was "contrary to the fundamental maxims of this Government;" and that in his view, the subjugation of the Cis-Sutlej area would be neither just nor expedient.⁷⁹ The defence of the Doab and the Delhi Territory would be undertaken without entering into any engagement either with the Sikh chiefs or with the Raja of Lahore: with whom Wellesley wished "to maintain a system of perfect neutrality."

During the last year of his Governor-Generalship, Wellesley was under great pressure from the Directors to limit further conquests and effect economies,⁸⁰ and it was obvious that whatever future wealth Ochterlony's proposed extension of territory might bring, the Company's financial resources were being severely strained by the heavy cost of the Maratha Wars.⁸¹ Wellesley was eventually recalled to England in July 1805 while Holkar was still at large:⁸² and his successor Lord Cornwallis arrived in India with the definite aim of bringing the war to an end, and of ridding the Company of what he considered to be "a great acquisition of unprofitable territory and of useless and burthensome allies and dependants."⁸³

79. Bengal Secret Consultations. 13th Jan. 1805.No.243.

80. Philips C.H."East India Company." pp 142-3

81. Kaye.J.W."Life & Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe." vol.1 pp.121-122. & Ross C."Correspondence of Charles First Marquis of Cornwallis" vol.111. p.544.

82. Thompson E."The Making of the Princes of India" pp.124-127.

83. Ross C. op.cit.Cornwallis to Castlereagh, 9th Aug.1805.p.539

Both he and the Senior Member of Council, Sir George Barlow, who assumed charge of affairs on Cornwallis' death in October, lost no time in setting to work to bring about peace and retrenchment; with the result that Sindia was pacified by a revision of the Treaty of Serji Argengaum in his favour. His sovereignty over Gwalior was restored,⁸⁴ and he received a pension of four lakhs of rupees with jagirs for his wife and daughter within British territory. Government also undertook not to interfere with Maratha activities in any state south of the Chambal or to enter into defensive alliances with rulers of such states as Jodhpur, Kotah, Malwa, or Mewar. In January 1806, peace was made with Holkar, who abandoned all claims to territory north of the Chambal but received back all his former possessions south of the Rivers Tapi and Godavery.⁸⁵

These peace treaties, made in response to the Directors' demands, abandoned much for which Wellesley had striven. Unwilling though he was to extend British territory to the west of Delhi, he had aimed at bringing the states of Rajputana under British influence and protection with the idea of preventing the French from playing a part in Indian affairs.⁸⁶

84. Roberts. P.E. "India under Wellesley." pp.265-266.

85. Thompson. E. op cit. pp 127-130.

86. Dodwell. H.H. "India" vol.1. p77.

Events in Europe a few years later were to re-shape British policy, especially with regard to the Cis-Sutlej Sikhs;⁸⁷ but for the time being, the Rajput and Sikh chiefs were left unprotected, a prey to the depredations of the Marathas and Ranjit Singh.

This policy of limitation made Delhi a frontier province; and it became one of the Resident's chief responsibilities to exercise a watchful influence over the chieftains whose lands bordered British territory. Many of these rulers either resided in Delhi for part of the year, or kept representatives in the city. These vakils had access to the Resident when occasion demanded, and they were also at hand to pay their respects to the King of Delhi on behalf of their masters. As the personal representative of the British Government, both to the royal house of Delhi and to the neighbouring chiefs, the Resident was accounted a man of great honour.⁸⁸ The British Government realised that in a city such as Delhi where ceremony was held in such esteem, its representative must maintain a state worthy of the high office he held. For this reason, a generous table allowance was made to the Resident which could be used for the reception and entertainment of visitors of rank and also for the maintenance of his Assistants who lived at the Residency and shared his table.

87. Vide. Chapter 3. pp 92-94.

88. Kaye. op. cit. vol.1 pp.240-241.

The Resident also had at his disposal monies from which he disbursed payments to news writers and other native agents who furnished him with intelligence. Similarly, expenses entailed by the oriental custom of giving and receiving presents on formal visits of ceremony were met from special funds; and the Resident was requested to present a detailed account of such expenditure once a month in the form of a contingent bill which was to be forwarded to the civil auditor.⁸⁹

Thus the Resident's position was one of great prestige; and his proximity to the royal family of Delhi made the office one of the most coveted positions in the Company's service. Ochterlony had held it for over two years, when the closing of the breach with Sindia and Holkar led indirectly to his removal. He had always been first and foremost a soldier, taking his orders more readily from the Commander-in-Chief than from the Governor-General in Council; and when peace was concluded, the Governor-General thought the time had come for Ochterlony to relinquish his charge to a civilian more experienced than he in the detail of governmental procedure and administration.⁹⁰ He was accordingly requested to hand over charge of affairs at Delhi to Archibald Seton;

89. Bengal Political Consultations. 23rd May.1805.No.161(~~C.C.'s M.~~)
 90. Bengal Secret Consultations. 27th Feb.1806.No.60.

and on the new Resident's arrival,⁹¹ Ochterlony departed to his command at Allahabad.

The Governor-General in Council wished it to be placed on record that Ochterlony's supersession in no way implied any censure on his conduct of affairs as Resident, but was occasioned by the new phase of development which lay ahead for the Delhi Territory now that hostilities were ended.⁹² Lord Lake paid his own tribute to Ochterlony when, in reply to Barlow, he wrote, "The able manner in which Lt. Col. Ochterlony fulfilled the duties committed to his charge, combined with his great and animated personal exertions in the defence of Delhi-----obtained him the highest approbation of the most Noble the Marquis Wellesley-----His uniform kindness and justice have also conciliated in the greatest degree the inhabitants of Delhi to the English Government, and I have seen with equal satisfaction and astonishment that City increasing rapidly in wealth and population during a period of actual hostility."⁹³

The praise was well-merited. Ochterlony's departure was regretted by the aged Shah Alam as well as by the inhabitants of Delhi. Towards the detail of administration, Ochterlony

91. Bengal Secret Consultations. 6th March. 1806. No.3

92. Ibid. 27th Feb. 1806. No.58.

93. Ibid. 6th March. 1806. No.1

had contributed little. External events had rendered that impracticable, even if Ochterlony had been the man for such a task; but his main contribution to the future government of the Delhi Territory lay in his insistence that the Resident must be vested with real power to govern the territory in his charge; and in the conciliatory persuasion by which Shah Alam was reconciled to accepting, with so little protest, his position as the royal pensioner of the Company.

Appendix. 1

Schedule.1

Statement of parganas, mainly in the Doab, annexed to the
Suba of Shah Jehanabad (The King's Jaghire.)

Rhosnah.
* Najafgarh
Anon
Tilbegampir
Purrachitgarh
Bahsonah
Dadree
Phorlseanah
Bhotahli & Akbarabad
Chowdah Shah Gung
Newallahgarh
Hutuhallah
Balundsher
Secundra
Shukurpur
Pali Pakul
Kurriore
* Allaverdi
Tehir Dunkur
* Havalli Palum

Loni
Kerahonah
Jelalabad
Baghput
Sevanoah
Ciamle

} Held by Begam Samru.

Revenue from these parganas in 1802 (F.S.1210)= Rs. 11,97,013
-15-3.

** On Western side of Jumna.

Appendix. 2

Schedule.3

Parganas under Lt.Col.Ochterlony's Management on the western
side of the R. Jumna. _____

Nujufghur
Havalli Palum
Pulwul
Allaverdi
Pali Pakul
Samalka
Boanah
Paniput
Ahanti
Nahnol
Soneput
Ghunor
Horut

Revenue from these parganas in 1803 (F.S.1211) = 2,93,731-12.9Rs

-Appendix. 3

Additional parganas proposed by Lt. Col. Ochterlony for
inclusion in the Assigned Territory.

Hoerat
Pulwul
Poonchamah
Buhor
Bohona
Sonah
Tauru
Fyzjara
Boanul
Tapokera
Huttin
Noh Ninniksar
Naggina
Kuwarri
Hanun
Namole
Nanti

These parganas were in Mewah, lately resumed from the
Rajah of Bharatpur.

Revenue in 1805= Rs. 5,75,000.

Extract from Bengal Secret Consultations, 12th Sept. 1805. No 138.

Appendix 4.

Jagirs and Jaidads within the Assigned Territory on the
Western side of the Jumna.

Freedabad, Allumghur
Hansi
Hissar
Mohun
Torhaun
Burwallah
Fatteabad
Rhotuck
Bhaddely
Bahadur Ghur
Jughire
Pathonay
Gohaun
Bursal

These lands were granted by Lord Lake as jagirs and Jaidads
to Patanⁿ and Sikh Chiefs. Their estimated revenue in
1805 = 6,40,000 Rs.

Extract from Bengal Secret Consultations. 12th Sept. 1805.No.138

Chapter. 3

The Administration of the Delhi Territory under Archibald Seton 1806--1811.

Seton, who was one of the Company's most respected covananted servants, took up his duties as Resident on 25th June 1806.⁹⁴ He brought to Delhi a detailed knowledge of the work of revenue settlement, and a first-hand experience of judicial procedure which he had gained as chief judge of the provincial court of appeals and circuit at Bareilly. Barlow thought that his successful handling of the turbulent population of the Ceded and Conquered Provinces rendered him peculiarly suitable for dealing with the situation at Delhi and of establishing there a system of settled administration.⁹⁵

Although Seton's main contribution to the development of the Delhi Territory was the shaping of its internal administration, at the outset emphasis was laid upon the political nature of his work.⁹⁶ For he came to Delhi at a critical juncture in its history when political issues were of prior importance. The aged Shah Alam had but a

94. Bengal Political Consultations. 17th July 1806.No.21

95. Bengal Secret Consultations. 27th Feb. 1806.No.58

96. Governor-General's Minute of 21st Jan.1806.

Board's Collections.No.4432.

few months to live: and it was essential that the accession of the new king should take place peacefully, and that northern India should not be plunged into the upheaval of another conflict. Moreover, the policy of retrenchment and non-intervention to which Barlow was pledged necessitated a speedy settlement of all outstanding territorial claims; and as a result, very soon after his arrival at Delhi, Seton had to complete the task of handing back to independent chiefs those lands west of the Jumna which the Company no longer wished to retain.⁹⁷ He had also to provide many jagirs within the bounds of the Delhi Territory for those who had claims on the Government. In the first instance, this task had been committed to Lord Lake; but his avowed disapproval of the Governor-General's policy caused Barlow to transfer⁹⁸ all such questions to the Resident at Delhi.

Thus from the outset of his term of office, this two-fold political problem claimed a large share of Seton's attention. The expected death of Shah Alam occurred on 19th November 1806, and he was succeeded by his eldest son Akbar II. Seton related how he was called to the palace by the mother of the heir apparent, as she thought his presence there would be "the only means of preventing confusion."⁹⁹ After being

97. Vide supra chapter 2. pp 38-40

98. Bengal Letters Received, 14th March 1806 para 2

99. Bengal Secret Consultations, 11th December. 1806 No.1

conducted to an inner apartment, where he found Akbar " seated in a disconsolate situation in the midst of his children," Seton accompanied him to the Diwan-i-khas, or hall of audience, where the new king was duly enthroned. The Resident then offered his congratulations and presented nazrs on behalf of the Governor-General and himself. Outside the palace where the population of Delhi had gathered, a proclamation followed by a royal salute of guns announced that the enthronement of the new king had taken place. Seton had taken the precaution of posting strong guards at the main entrance to the palace and at the Jama Mosque, and Akbar's accession was marked by no disturbance. It was with some measure of relief that the Resident was able to report that public tranquility had not " suffered the smallest interruption in consequence of the above events."

This intelligence was received with considerable satisfaction by the Governor-General in Council,¹⁰⁰ who had viewed with some apprehension the possible repercussions in India of the first accession to the throne of Delhi since the power of the Company had been established there. In spite of the dependent position in which the royal house of Delhi stood to the Company, in 1806 the King of Delhi was still

100. Bengal Letters Received. 19th December. 1806. para.2

regarded as a person of importance: and both the death of Shah Alam and the accession of Akbar were marked by royal honours, the Governor-General commanding a salute of minute guns to be fired from all military stations in the three presidencies.¹⁰¹ At the time of Seton's appointment as Resident, possession of the person of the King of Delhi was still a matter of such importance that Seton was asked to arrange for the removal of the royal family from Delhi to a safer place of residence.¹⁰² Though this project was never carried into effect, it continued to be an object of policy throughout Seton's period of office; and it persisted until all fear of a French invasion of India vanished with the downfall of Napoleon.

The settlement of 23rd May 1805 was still under discussion in England when the news arrived of Shah Alam's death; and when giving their approval, the Court of Directors and the Board of Control expressed the hope that the accession of the new king would not make any difference to the relations thus established between the Company and the royal house of Delhi.¹⁰³ Such hopes, however, were not to be fulfilled: for the accession of Akbar II marked the beginning of a

101. Bengal Secret Consultations. 5th December. 1806.No.4

102. Governor-General's Minute of 21st Jan.1806.

Board's Collections 4432.

103. Bengal Despatches 2nd Sept. 1807.(political) paras.12-14

definite attempt to reverse the trend of events which had made the King of Delhi a pensioner of the Company, and to re-establish the former power and authority of the Mughal Emperors. This attempt, though doomed to ultimate failure, was to persist throughout the reign of Akbar II; and was to be a source of considerable embarrassment to the Court of Directors, to the Governor-General in Council, and to the Resident at Delhi.

Shortly after his accession, Akbar's desire to re-establish the sovereignty and power enjoyed by his forbears found expression in a number of demands which the king claimed as belonging to his royal prerogative. He insisted on his right to receive tokens of homage from other Indian rulers and to confirm their titles; and he did his best to manoeuvre the Governor-General into acknowledging publicly his vassalage to the King of Delhi. Akbar also thought that he was entitled to be represented at Fort William by his own ambassador, instead of receiving communications from the Governor-General through the Resident; and he was determined to appoint his own successor to the throne of Delhi regardless of the law of primogeniture and in spite of the expressed wishes of the Governor-General. Akbar also claimed an increased royal stipend, and asserted his right to assume the direct government of the Delhi Territory and to control its revenues.

This created a situation fraught with difficulty; for by 1806 the position of the King of Delhi as a nominal ruler and pensioner of the Company had been accepted by the authorities both in London and Fort William: and although the outward trappings of royalty were permitted, there was no intention that Akbar should exercise regal power outside the confines of his palace. The task of reconciling these two conflicting conceptions of royal authority devolved upon the Resident; and Seton found that the situation taxed both his patience and ingenuity to the uttermost. He soon discovered that Akbar's pretensions were mainly due to the influence of the princesses of the Zanana and intriguers within the palace:¹⁰⁴ for the King himself was indolent and weak-willed, and he could be easily led into duplicity by counsellors sufficiently plausible to promise him the fulfilment of his wishes.¹⁰⁵ Among the begams of the palace, the outstanding character was the King's favourite wife, Mumtaz Mahal, the mother of Mirza Jehangir. She was usually known as "the Queen" and her influence dominated both the palace and the King.¹⁰⁶ Seton described her as "active, vigilant, mercenary, jealous, and ambitious"¹⁰⁷ and

104. Bengal Letters Received 22nd April. 1807 (political) para. 6

105. Bengal Political Consultations. 17th Oct. 1809. No. 8

106. Bengal Secret and Separate Consultations. 15th Aug. 1809
No. 49.

107. Bengal Political Consultations. 17th Oct. 1809. No. 8

characterised her influence over the King as "fatal and destructive." Of the older generation the most influential person was Qadsia Begam, the King's mother, who persisted in upholding the ancient usages of the House of Timur, even when they were contrary to the enlightened spirit of the times. Against this background, Akbar stood revealed as weak and vacillating: and throughout his five years at Delhi, Seton experienced the greatest difficulty in holding the King to his word, and in deterring^{him} from actions contrary to the wishes of Government.

Naturally sympathetic and conciliatory by disposition, Seton's approach to the King at times bordered on subservience - or so it seemed to his young assistant Charles Metcalfe,¹⁰⁸ who on 25th August 1806 was appointed to replace Spedding.¹⁰⁹ The Governor-General in Council was inclined to adopt a similar view, until he found that intriguers within the palace were capable of disregarding not only the persuasions of the Resident but the orders of Government itself. Seton could act with promptitude and firmness when occasion demanded,¹¹⁰ and any failure to achieve the ends desired by the Governor-General in Council in connection with the royal family of Delhi was due rather to the difficulties inherent

108. Letter from Metcalfe to J.W.Sherer dated 16th June.1807
Quoted in "Life & Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe"
vol.1 p.155

109. Thompson.E."Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe"p.64

110. (As in the case of Jehangir's revolt. vide infra p 66)

in the situation than to any irresolution or mishandling on the part of the Resident.

Akbar's attempt to translate the nominal sovereignty allowed him by Government into real power forced both the Governor-General in Council and the Court of Directors to define more clearly the relationship in which the Company stood both to the king of Delhi and to those Indian rulers who had formerly owned allegiance to the Mughal Emperors. In fact, the more Akbar sought to make himself independent of British control, the more necessary it became for Government to define the limitations of his power. In like manner, the Company had been sincere in declaring that it had no desire to assume any of the Mughal's prerogatives over other Indian rulers, and this decision was endorsed by the Directors as late as 1807;¹¹¹ but in spite of this, the Governor-General in Council discouraged Akbar from conferring titles and bestowing khillats of investiture on rulers already under the Company's authority and protection. It was the King's persistence in such acts which aroused Government to a new awareness of the nature and extent of the sovereignty it had acquired, which was ultimately to find expression in the conception of the Company as the paramount power in India.

111. Bengal Despatches, 2nd September. 1807 para.12.

Even before the demise of Shah Alam, the Governor-General in Council had stated categorically that any direct application to the King of Delhi for the grant of honours by any subject of the Company was "highly improper:"¹¹² and such applications were only permitted when made through the Resident with the previous sanction of Government. Akbar's determination to bestow khillats on the Governor-General, the Members of Council, and several Indian rulers was condemned as "inexpedient" and "altogether unnecessary;" and likewise it was deemed "highly objectionable" that the King should grant titles to princes and chiefs who were wholly unconnected with the throne of Delhi except by nominal relationships which had long since ceased to have any reality.¹¹³

The most notable case of this kind occurred when the Nawab of Bengal sent his congratulations to Akbar on his accession and was given the title of Mubarak ud Daula. In return, he expressed a wish to send to Delhi a nazr of 101 gold mohurs with his thanks and desired the King to grant a sanad conferring on him the ancient title of Subadar of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. The Nawab also declared his intention of reading Akbar's letter in full darbar at Murshidabad, and

112. Bengal Political Consultations 13th March 1806.No.34.

113. Bengal Letters Received.-31st July 1807 para.208.

requested the attendance of the principal civil and military officers on that occasion.¹¹⁴

The instructions issued to the Superintendent of Nizamat Affairs were both explicit and enlightening. All intercourse between the Nawab of Bengal and the King of Delhi was to be discouraged. Approval was given for the Nawab to assume the title already granted; but the Governor-General in Council was not prepared to sanction the Nawab's application for a revival of his ancient title, and saw no reason for the attendance of the principal officers of the station on the occasion of Akbar's letter being read in darbar. In short, Government definitely wished to discountenance the giving and receiving of such honours; and in the event of the Nawab reviving the subject, the Superintendent was to explain to him " the utter incompatibility of such an exercise of Imperial authority with the actual condition of His Majesty and the royal family."¹¹⁵

One of Seton's most important tasks was to prevent Akbar from reviving obsolete acts of sovereignty such as this; and he not only successfully persuaded the King to refrain from sending khillats to the chiefs of India, but he prevented applications for such honours being made to Delhi. Akbar,

114. Bengal Letters Received 31st July 1807. paras.281-286.

115. Ibid.

" " " " " " " " " "

however, was not to be diverted from his intention of conferring ⁿkhillats on the Governor-General and Members of Council, and he proposed to send a confidential servant named Shah Haji to the Presidency with the dresses of honour. The Governor-General in Council was fully aware of the motive behind the proposed investiture and declined to accept the khillats, declaring that such honours could be received only "with a degree of exterior ceremony and submission inconsistent with the real rank and ascendancy" which the British held among the states of India.¹¹⁶ Seton was directed to temper his courtesy with firmness, and make known to the King the Government's refusal and the reasons for it. Akbar then changed his tactics and expressed a desire to send Shah Haji to Fort William in a private capacity. To this there was no obvious objection, and the Governor-General agreed to receive Shah Haji provided it was fully understood that his mission was entirely of a private nature.

Having made it clear that Government had no intention of countenancing Akbar's pretensions to supremacy either over itself or the native rulers of India, the Governor-General in Council had next to meet Akbar's challenge on the question of the succession to the throne of Delhi. The settlement

116. Bengal Letters Received. 2nd February. 1808. paras. 89 & 90.

of 23rd May 1805 had left the king complete control over his family and all who resided within the palace; and the Governor-General in Council was loth to interfere with the domestic arrangements of the royal household. The succession to the throne, however, was a matter of importance to Government as well as to the King; and when Akbar, acting under the influence of Muntaz Mahal, proposed to acknowledge his third son Jehangir as heir apparent, the Governor-General in Council intervened. In so doing, he aroused the resentment of the King and the hostility of Muntaz Mahal who used all her influence and ingenuity to gain recognition for her son Jehangir as the future King.

Succession according to primogeniture was recognised by Muhammadan as well as by English law; and Akbar's reasons for setting aside the rights of his eldest son Abu Zafar were based on the latter's alleged misconduct within the domestic circle of the palace.¹¹⁷ The charges against Abu Zafar were never proved and were probably unfounded;¹¹⁸ but the King always remained hostile towards his eldest son, and left no stone unturned to gain recognition for Jehangir as heir apparent. Within the palace, this high-spirited and undisciplined young man was encouraged to regard himself as the future ruler of Delhi; and he grew up subject to no other authority than that of his own ungovernable temper.

117. Bengal Secret Consultations 26th Feb. 1807. No. 25

118. Ibid. 9th April. 1807. No. 8c

Until his death in 1823, he was a source of trouble and disturbance to his family, the Resident, and the Government.

Seton was unable to do more than persuade Akbar to defer the public acknowledgement of Jehangir as heir apparent until reference had been made to the Governor-General;¹¹⁹ and Seton forwarded a letter from the King in which he solicited the concurrence of the Governor-General to Jehangir's investiture. The Governor-General had no intention of recognising what he termed "an act of injustice;" and when replying to Akbar, he suggested that the appointment of an heir apparent should be postponed. "Since by the favour of Divine Providence Your Majesty will, during a long course of years, adorn the throne of your ancestors," he wrote, "I most respectfully recommend to Your Majesty to relinquish that design."¹²⁰ Akbar, who saw no reason why he need consult the British Government on what he considered a family matter, wrote a second letter to the Governor-General who took exception both to its style and its contents.¹²¹ Seton was told to inform Akbar that in future no letters "framed in objectionable terms" would be forwarded to Fort William and that it was incumbent on His Majesty to take the advice of the Governor-General on this matter. If Akbar

119. Bengal Letters Received 5th Feb. 1807. para. 24.

120. Bengal Secret Consultations. 9th April 1807. No. 7

121. Bengal Secret Consultations. 9th April 1807. No. 8c

persisted in his intention of proclaiming Jehangir heir apparent, Seton was to absent himself from the ceremony of investiture and so publicly discountenance any recognition¹²² of Jehangir by the British Government.

The King's second letter, more particularly the offensive terms in which it was couched, brought home to the Governor-General the necessity of taking definite action with regard to Akbar and his claims. Somewhat unfairly, Seton was held responsible for the King's attitude, for Barlow believed that the Resident's "respectful persuasions" tended to encourage rather than restrain Akbar's pretensions. Seton was told to guard against this error in his future dealings with the King and to remonstrate with the princesses of the palace on their ill-advised counsel. If need be, he was to threaten a more stringent control of the royal family, "if such an arrangement became indisputably necessary."¹²³ Finally it was made clear to the Resident that it was his business to stand between the King and the Government; and "to prevent by his intermediate agency the direct agitation between His Majesty and the Governor-General of questions of such delicacy as had formed the subject of His Majesty's late letters."¹²⁴

122. Bengal Secret Consultations. 9th April 1807.No.8c

123. Ibid. 28th.Dec. 1807.No.1A

124. Ibid. 16th April.1807.No.1

Seton did his best to comply; and Akbar did not renew the subject of Jehangir's investiture until Shah Haji's visit to Calcutta in 1809. But the matter was only outwardly in abeyance. Within the palace, every device open to oriental subtlety was used to demonstrate the pre-eminent position of Jehangir. Honours such as the Aftabgir which traditionally were reserved for the heir apparent, were given to Jehangir in full darbar in the presence of the Resident; and Seton's remonstrances were only partially effective in repairing the mischief.

The Governor-General's suggestion that Akbar should postpone the investiture of the heir apparent was not merely a political expedient, it was also a measure of economy. When Akbar succeeded to the throne of Delhi in 1806, Barlow proposed to continue payment of the royal stipend as in the days of Shah Alam with the exception of the allowance of Rs.7,000 a month allowed to the heir apparent. This was to cease since Akbar was now King.¹²⁵ This measure did not ultimately prove to be an economy, for it led to an agitation for an increase in the royal stipend; and though Barlow firmly refused any such augmentation of the King's pension, when the question was

125. Bengal Secret Consultations 10th December.1806.No.35.

reviewed in 1809, the king's claim met with a large measure of success.

Lord Minto, who succeeded Barlow as Governor-General in July 1807, arrived in India when relations with the court of Delhi were at their worst. He brought to India a less stereotyped outlook than that of the Senior Member of Council, and he had the advantage of taking office at a time when the Company's finances were beginning to recover from the strain of the Maratha wars.¹²⁶ The need for stringent economy was not so urgent; and Minto, in an endeavour to come to a better understanding with the King of Delhi, agreed to receive Shah Haji at Calcutta.

All hopes of a successful outcome to Shah Haji's mission were doomed however, when the King's emissary announced that he carried a letter and a cloak of honour from Akbar to the Governor-General whom he proposed to invest with every mark of public ceremony.¹²⁷ In so doing, he violated the fundamental condition of his reception at the Presidency, and opened the eyes of Government to the fact that his mission was but another and more direct attempt to force the Governor-General in Council to agree to demands which for the past year, Seton had successfully prevented from being made.

126. Governor-General's Minute of ⁶Xth June 1809. para 21
Bengal Political Consultations. 17th June 1809. No. 7

127. Home Miscellaneous Series Vol. 708. p. 97.

Government countered this move by deputing Monckton, Secretary to the Persian Department, to receive Shah Haji and listen to his representations; but the Governor-General was determined to prove to the King that such methods could only result in failure. Seton was kept fully informed of all that took place in the interviews between Shah Haji and the Persian Secretary who told the Resident that it was absolutely necessary that the mission of Shah Haji should terminate unsuccessfully "as to concede any point--to the King on the representations of his private agent which had been rejected through the regular and established channels of official intercourse would obviously destroy the just influence and authority of the Resident at His Majesty's court."¹²⁸

After Shah Haji's departure, it was Seton's unpleasant duty to tell the King of the Governor-General's decisions. Akbar was informed that his letter and cloak of honour would receive due consideration if sent through the regular channel of the Persian Office: but Government could neither sanction his claim to administer directly the Delhi Territory nor uphold his right to issue "grants to all subhas, nabobs, rajahs, and jagirdars, and to make the legitimacy of their rights depend upon their holding commissions from the Throne."¹²⁹

128. Bengal Political Consultations, 13th March. 1809. No. 103.

129. Bengal Letters Received. 1st August 1809.

Nor was the Governor-General willing to put pressure upon the Vizier or any native ruler to enforce payment of the ancient customary dues to the royal treasury. With regard to Jehangir whom the King now desired to nominate as his "executor" --an office always traditionally reserved for the heir apparent - the Governor-General stated that Akbar " was certainly at liberty to appoint his own executor, but that the British Government would never acknowledge any other principle than the right of primogeniture, and could therefore never recognise as heir apparent any other than the prince on whom that station of right devolves." The Governor-General's despatch to Seton ¹³⁰ expressed the hope that the complete failure of Shah Haji's mission would convince the King of the futility of pressing his demands, and would "lead him to adopt a line of conduct more consonant with the state of dependence" in which the royal family had been placed by the course of events.

Lord Minto, however, thought that there was some justice in Akbar's claim to an increased royal stipend; and after an exhaustive review of the question, ¹³¹ he recommended that the King's annual pension should be raised to twelve lakhs of rupees. ¹³² This decision he based on three main considerations.

130. Bengal Political Consultations. 13th.March.1809.No.13

131. Governor-General's Minute of 6th June.1809.

Bengal Political Consultations. 17th June.1809.No.7

132. Ibid. para.69.

-----the provisional promise made by Lord Wellesley in 1805 that the royal stipend should be augmented when circumstances allowed; the increased expenses of the royal household since the death of Shah Alam; and the urgent need to conciliate the King of Delhi by some tangible mark of good-will.¹³³

Lord Wellesley had held out the hope that when times of greater prosperity should come and the productivity of the Delhi Territory increase, Government might be able to augment the King's income; and Lord Minto considered that by this declaration the faith of Government had been pledged.¹³⁴ He also pointed out that if the lands on the right bank of the Jumna granted as jagirs were included, their total revenue would exceed the amount of the royal stipend when it was originally granted.¹³⁵ Thus both "justice and expediency" suggested a favourable consideration of the King's claim. Lord Minto also thought that there had been a considerable increase in the expenses of the royal household since the death of Shah Alam who "being extremely advanced in years and deprived of his sight---had little inducement to indulge in the forms of state and exterior splendour which he could not behold; while the ordinary occupation of personages of his rank and station were denied to him by his age, his

133. Bengal Letters Received 1st August. 1809.paras.51-52.

134. Governor-General's Minute of 6th June 1809.para.21.

135. Ibid. paras. 23--25.

misfortunes, and his infirmities."¹³⁶ This was not so with Akbar II; and on his accession, there was a natural desire to return to a mode of life more in keeping with royal state. Moreover, death had deprived Akbar of his father's capable and experienced governor of the palace, Shah Newaz Khan; and not only did the salary of Rs 2,000 a month allowed him by Government lapse at his death, but his vacant offices were given to the King's sons who needed paid deputies to do the actual work. "I cannot but consider," concluded the Governor-General, "that the present King's situation in a pecuniary point of view" is less advantageous than that of his father.

But the over-ruling consideration for increasing the royal stipend was the need to conciliate the King of Delhi; for the Governor-General was fully alive to the fundamental issue between the King and the Government which he described as "an inherent incompatibility in our connection for which there is probably no cure but the gradual operation of time and habit." Lord Minto thought that the situation might be eased by meeting the King's demand for an increased pension; but he also thought that the time had come when Akbar should be told quite frankly of "his absolute personal dependence upon the Company's Government."¹³⁷ The Governor-General

136. Governor-General's Minute of 6th June. 1809 paras. 34--37.

137. Ibid. para. 47.

was satisfied that if this task was entrusted to Seton, it would be "divested of all asperity and clothed in its gentlest and most acceptable form," Consequently the Resident was asked to tell the King of the decision to increase the royal stipend, but he was to choose his time so that there should be no possibility of this concession being represented as the result of Shah Haji's visit to Calcutta. On this occasion, Seton was instructed to lay aside customary forms of ceremonious address, and in candid terms make clear to the King his relationship of dependence to the British Government. With regard to the succession to the throne, however, the Governor-General would make no concession; and out of the proposed increase in the royal stipend, the monthly sum of Rs.7,000 was to be reserved until such time as Akbar should bestow upon his eldest son the dignity of heir apparent.¹³⁸

For his part, Seton wished to use the occasion to procure the introduction of certain reforms in the interior organisation of the palace. In particular, he was anxious to prevent any misappropriation of the increased revenues of the King whereby Mumtaz Mahal could advance large sums to Jehangir for the maintenance of the band of lawless young nobles who acted as his bodyguard.¹³⁹

138. Governor-General's Minute of 6th June. 1809. para.71

139. Bengal Political Consultations. 17th June. 1809. and No. 1
 417th October. 1809. No. 8.

While the Governor-General was considering how best to appease Akbar and yet bring him " to a just view of his real situation," events occurred at Delhi which caused Seton to withhold news of the augmentation of the King's stipend for nearly a year. In the interval, much happened which both clarified the situation and increased the power and prestige of the Resident. One of Seton's earliest commissions from the Governor-General in Council had been to explore the possibility of removing the King and the most important members of the royal family from Delhi to a safer place of residence; and this request had been repeated with some urgency in 1808 when the possibility of a French invasion of India from the north west seemed imminent.¹⁴⁰ Seton had been aware from the first that Akbar of his own free will, would never quit the home of his ancestors; and that it would be almost impossible to force him to do so unless troops under the command of a British Officer were again in control of the entrances to the palace.¹⁴¹ The Resident's efforts to win the King's consent to such a measure were unavailing until the insubordinate conduct of Jehangir forced Akbar to agree to Seton's request. An outrage in the palace on the night of 20th July 1809, when

140. Bengal Secret & Separate Consultations 8th Aug. 1809. No. 1

141. In 1803, with a view to freeing Shah Alam from vexatious interference, the household troops had been placed under the immediate control of the King; and the practice of appointing a European Officer to sleep in the palace was discontinued.

Jehangir not only horse-whipped his mother but "attempted to hew in pieces " his great-uncle the Killadar of the palace for trying to enforce an order given by the King, drove Seton to further action. "Matters being come to this pass", he wrote "it was evident to me -----that unless I succeeded in obtaining a degree of control in regard to the gates of the palace and the guards, the confusion would increase and probably lead to some disaster."¹⁴² Consequently he approached the king who reluctantly consented to two companies of sepoy being posted at each of the palace gates.¹⁴³ Jehangir took it upon himself to oppose the entry of the British troops; and with a party of his followers took possession of the gates. In an endeavour to persuade the prince to behave reasonably, Seton was fired at, and was obliged to call military aid to quell what was little short of open rebellion against the king and the authority of Government. In the fighting which ensued, the palace gates had to be blown open before Jehangir would capitulate.¹⁴⁴ He was taken prisoner and kept in the British lines for some weeks,¹⁴⁵ until Government finally decided to send him to Allahabad where he remained for a year in the charge of the governor of the fort.¹⁴⁶ After a tumult which might easily have reached

142. Bengal Secret & Separate Consultations. 8th Aug. 1809. No. 4

143. Ibid. " " " No. 2

144. Ibid. " " " No. 4

145. Bengal Political Consultations. 10th Oct. 1809. No. 14.

146. Bengal Letters Received 21st Oct. 1809. para. 2.

uglier proportions, Seton was glad to report that "the most perfect tranquility " prevailed at Delhi;¹⁴⁷ and he was equally gratified to learn of Government's "entire approbation of the firmness and judgment " he had displayed during these difficult days.¹⁴⁸

With Jehangir four hundred miles distant at Allahabad and his turbulent followers dispersed, peace descended upon the palace. Seton was anxious to introduce into the royal household men "whose integrity, ability, and attachment to the British Government could be relied on;" and in response to his solicitations, Akbar appointed Ashraf Bey to command and pay the najibs of the palace, and Noaziah Khan and Abul Nasim to control the household.¹⁴⁹ As a result of this reorganisation, Mumtaz Mahal's power over expenditure within the palace was considerably curtailed; and her influence received a further check when Akbar at last consented to recognise Abu Zafar as heir apparent.¹⁵⁰ His investiture took place in full darbar at Delhi on 16th January 1810.¹⁵¹

There was now no further reason for withholding from the King news of the augmentation of the royal stipend; and in June 1810, Seton sought an audience with Akbar. The Resident

147. Bengal Secret & Separate Consultations 15th Aug. 1809. No. 49

148. Ibid. 8th Aug. 1809. No. 8

149. Bengal Political Consultations. 17th. Oct. 1809. No. 8

150. Ibid. 30th January. 1810 No. 49.

151. Ibid. 6th February. 1810 No. 4

was fully conscious of the delicacy of his task; and after presenting the Governor-General's letter and his own arzi, he decided from Akbar's demeanour that the events of the past few months had rendered unnecessary that explicit declaration of the King's position of dependence which he had been instructed to make. "I have only to observe" he wrote when reporting the interview, "that as far as I can judge, the king has a just and proper sense of the line of conduct which the British Government wishes him to pursue, and that I therefore thought it needless to be more explicit."¹⁵² In thus sparing the King's feelings, Seton acted with questionable wisdom: for Akbar continued to intrigue to secure his ambitions; and he repaid Seton's consideration by endeavouring to discredit him in the eyes of his own Government.¹⁵³ Lord Minto, however, accepted Seton's statement, and decided that any further declaration by the Resident was unnecessary.¹⁵⁴

The augmentation of the royal stipend did much to improve relations with the King; but Seton realised that Akbar would never be completely reconciled while his favourite son was exiled. After much deliberation, he suggested to the Governor-General in Council that under proper safeguards

152. Bengal Political Consultations. 30th June. 1810 No. 44.

153. Vide infra chapter 4. p.p. 99-100

154. Bengal Political Consultations. 30th June. 1810. No. 46

Jehangir might be allowed to return to Delhi.¹⁵⁵ with the result that on 20th November 1810, after more than a year's absence, Jehangir was restored to his parents. Seton reported that the event seemed to be "extremely gratifying to all ranks and descriptions of people."¹⁵⁶

The Resident hoped that all was now well: and that the King, accepting the limitations of his position, would cease to make further attempts to oppose the wishes of the Governor-General in Council. In this, he failed to make sufficient allowance for the weak and credulous character of Akbar who was, even then, planning to send a secret emissary to Calcutta to renew his claims and demand Seton's punishment and dismissal!¹⁵⁷ News of this intrigue did not reach Seton until after he had joined the Governor-General's staff; and he left Delhi in 1811 happy in the belief that the most difficult of his tasks had been accomplished with a large measure of success; and that the Governor-General's high praise of the "discretion, energy, and firmness" he had shown under circumstances of personal and public danger was well-merited.¹⁵⁸

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- 155. Bengal Political Consultations. 14th July.1810.No.20
- 156. Ibid. 7th Dec. 1810.No.21
- 157. Ibid. 26th July.1811.Nos.105-108
and Chapt.4.p.99.
- 158. Ibid. 30th June.1811.No.46.

Apart from his dealings with the royal family of Delhi, the other political issue which occupied Seton concerned the settlement of lands west of the Jumna which had been partially completed by Lord Lake in 1805. Not only had Seton to dispose of those lands to the west of Delhi which Government no longer wished to retain; but suitable jagirs had to be found for those officers of Sindia whom Government was bound to compensate for their services to the British in the Maratha wars. This two-fold territorial settlement was a task of great intricacy, and Seton was only too conscious of the future difficulties it might create.

In 1806, Sir George Barlow proposed that the large areas to the west of the Delhi Territory, which had fallen under the nominal jurisdiction of the British at the close of the war with Sindia, should be used to reward certain Pathan and Sikh chiefs who had rendered services to the British; and also to compensate others who owned estates in the Doab which Government wished to appropriate. Lands thus granted were to be independent possessions, the Governor-General in Council disclaiming any responsibility for their protection or administration. Under this arrangement, much of the land which bordered the Delhi Territory was disposed of:

to the south-west, the Baraitch Pathans received Kanound, Kanti, Narnol, Bawul, and Dadree; to the west, Abdul Summud Khan was granted the large area of Hariana; while lands to the north-west were given to various Sikh Chiefs. By these measures, the Governor-General thought to solve two problems. Government had rid itself of the expense of administering and protecting large areas beyond the Jumna; and at the same time, had removed from the Doab turbulent chiefs and their followers whose character and habits did not easily fit in to the administrative system of the Ceded and Conquered Provinces. In the Delhi Territory, however, Seton was to find them uneasy neighbours; and in the next few years events were to show that the territorial settlement which Seton had to make was but a temporary expedient which in many cases had to be modified within a short time of its completion.

An outstanding example was Hariana, an area of three thousand square miles which Seton described as being " from time immemorial-----the scene of anarchy, disorder, and rebellion,-----destitute of water and supplies."¹⁵⁹ Although nominally part of Sindia's dominions in Hindustan, neither he nor the British had succeeded in establishing their

159. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 18th Aug. 1809 No. 23

authority over its inhabitants and over the marauding tribe of Bhattis who dwelt on its western border. After a year of incessant strife, during which Abdul Summud Khan had spent nearly six lakhs of rupees in his attempt to collect revenue amounting to Rs 1,60,000, he had been obliged to withdraw to Rohtak.¹⁶⁰ In 1807 he appealed to Seton for assistance; and asked to be relieved of a possession which had proved to be a liability.

Having been at some pains to dispose of so turbulent and unproductive an area, the Governor-General in Council was not anxious to resume possession of Haryana; but lying as it did in a strategic position between Delhi and the Panjab, political considerations induced Lord Minto in 1808 to incorporate the whole of the territories granted to Abdul Summud Khan into the Delhi Territory.¹⁶¹ Thus it became Seton's responsibility first to subdue and subsequently to administer this large area which had defied all previous attempts to render it peaceable and productive. His first task was to establish order; and he sent his assistant, the Hon. Edward Gardner, with a detachment of troops to establish British authority in the chief forts and villages. Skinner's corps of irregular horse proved to be the most

160. Bengal Letters Received. 1st Oct. 1807. paras.100-102.

161. Ibid 7th Feb. 1809. paras. 71-99.

effective means of curbing the Bhattis and subduing rebellious areas; but before the country was finally subjugated, Seton found it necessary to extend British rule as far westward as
¹⁶² Bhiwani ¹⁶³ and Fatehabad.

The Resident did not consider the ordinary system of administration such as he had recently introduced into the
¹⁶⁴ Delhi Territory to be applicable to a newly-conquered area such as Hariana where pasturage was more productive than tillage owing to the scarcity of wells and the great distance of all water from the surface of the soil. He suggested that for the time being, tahsildars should be
¹⁶⁵ responsible both for police and revenue collection; and since the inhabitants "could hardly be brought to consent to a measurement of their lands," it would be advisable to accept a revenue assessment based on the produce of a
¹⁶⁶ relatively favourable year. In an area so dependent on
¹⁶⁷ the rains and subject to devastating visitations of locusts, revenue returns were always likely to be variable; but a year after the establishment of British authority, Seton was able to report that Hariana had yielded a surplus of Rs. 2,25,471-8-11 after all charges of management had been

162. Bengal Political Consultations. 17th Oct. 1809. No. 17.
 163. Ibid. 28th Dec. 1810. Nos. 98 & 101.
 164. Vide infra pp. 76 - 82.
 165. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 6th Oct. 1809. No. 54.
 166. Ibid. " " " No. 52.
 167. Ibid. 12th Nov. 1811. No. 40.

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 defrayed. The more settled conditions of life also encouraged migratory settlers to re-inhabit deserted villages; and by the time of Seton's departure from Delhi, more than a hundred villages - many of which had lain waste for half a century - were re-occupied and cultivated.¹⁶⁹

Though the resumption of Haryana greatly extended the boundary of the Delhi Territory to the west, the territorial settlement of 1806 was not completed without further inroads into the area already under Seton's control. To accomplish the task of finding jagirs for Sindia's officers, Seton was obliged to alienate large tracts of the Assigned Territory, as it had been found impossible to obtain jagirs as originally intended in the districts of Mynpuri, Agra, Koel, and Seharunpur.¹⁷⁰ Even so, it was difficult to find lands acceptable to all claimants, some of whom were granted pensions in lieu of jagirs.

This grant of jagirs within the Delhi Territory created an administrative problem of considerable dimensions. Both Metcalfe and William Fraser complained that jagir lands were badly-managed. In the northern districts of Sonipat, Panipat, and Gunour, the lands granted to jagirdars exceeded those

168. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 8th Sept. 1810.No.38.

169. Ibid. 2nd July. 1811.No.41.

170. Bengal Secret Consultations. 26th June. 1806.No.27.

under the direct management of the Resident, and in 1807, Metcalfe was reporting "cruel outrages " and " the most oppressive extortion practised by powerful jagirdars."¹⁷¹ Since the authority of the Resident over these lands was ill-defined, disturbances were frequent; and four years later, Fraser reported that " although it was the duty of the jagirdar to report regularly to Delhi on the state of his district, no information was made to the Resident-----and the jagirdars and their servants continued to exert---the most illegal -----oppressive ----and unjust authority."¹⁷² It was not surprising that Government was anxious to resume jagir lands as speedily as possible.

It soon became apparent, however, from the numerous claims made by the heirs of deceased jagirdars that the people of India did not regard the holding of a jagir merely as a life tenure. Seton was asked to report on the question: and although he thought that the heirs of jagirdars could not claim possession of a jagir " as a matter of right," he suggested that Government should grant them some financial compensation.¹⁷³ A test case occurred on the death of Bang Singh who held a large jagir in Panipat; and to establish

171. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 11th June. 1807.
No. 36

172. Ibid. 21st May. 1811. No. 102.

173. Bengal Political Consultations. 4th July. 1808. No. 30.

a precedent, the Governor General in Council ruled that the land should be resumed and that the heir should be granted a pension equal to two thirds of the annual value of the jagir.¹⁷⁴ But it was not always practicable thus to dispossess a family of lands it had come to regard as hereditary; and Government finally determined to deal with each case on its merits. It was decided that the heirs of the deceased jagirdar should either receive a pension, or Government would continue the grant of the jagir - or a portion of it - for a number of generations at a fixed rent.¹⁷⁵ Neither Government nor the Resident, however, was prepared to uphold any grant of jagirs by the King of Delhi; and when, in response to a request from the Begam Samru, he bestowed Tharreh and Padshapur upon her son-in-law George Dyce, the Governor General insisted that the sanads should be withdrawn.¹⁷⁶

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Seton considered it one of his main tasks to introduce a definite system of revenue administration into those parts of the Delhi Territory under his direct control; but he was obliged to exclude not only jagir lands but lands held on

174. Bengal Political Consultations. 4th July 1808.No.34
175. Bengal Letters Received. 27th July.1811 paras.106 & 107
176. Bengal Political Consultations. 15th Feb.1808. Nos.8 & 10

istimrar tenure. These lands were usually held by a native of rank who collected the revenue from his estate and paid a fixed rent to Government. During the early years of Seton's administration, the chief istimrar districts in the Delhi Territory were Ahamudpur, Bamnowli, Burahi, Munowli, Chatterpur, Hurchundpur, Rohat, and the four parganas of Hattin, Pulwul, Nujufghur, and Horul. In 1807 their annual rent amounted to Rs.1,41,816-0-0, nearly one third of the total revenue of the Assigned Lands.¹⁷⁷ The remaining areas under the direct authority of the Resident were Havalli Palum in the immediate neighbourhood of the city of Delhi; certain districts in Rewari and Mewat to the south; and the northern parganas of Soneput, Paniput, and Gunour. It was in these areas that Seton proposed to introduce a revenue settlement.

Seton had a natural gift for administrative work; and the instructions he issued to Metcalfe when he was sent to make the first land settlements in the Delhi Territory are a model of their kind.¹⁷⁸ Metcalfe, who had little liking for the routine work of administration¹⁷⁹ and who was without previous experience of revenue settlements,¹⁸⁰ found Seton's knowledge reassuring when he was brought for the first time

177. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 11th Feb.1808.No.25

178. Ibid. 26th Feb.1808.No.32

179. Metcalfe's letter to J.W.Sherer of 10th July 1807 -

Quoted in Kaye's "Life and correspondence". vol.1.p.160.

180. Metcalfe's letter to J.W.Sherer of 25th Oct.1806 -

Quoted in Thompson's "Metcalfe" p.66.

into contact with the detail of land tenures in the area around Delhi. He found the scattered villages of Havalli Palum inhabited mostly by " tractible and submissive " peasants¹⁸¹ who cultivated their lands in accordance with the usage common to the ancient village communities of upper India. In the various districts of the Delhi Territory there were minor variations of custom; but in the main, the village communities consisted of families of peasant proprietors commonly known as zamindars who managed their own internal affairs and were represented in their dealings with Government by one of their number called a Muqaddam.¹⁸² It was the business of this headman of the village to collect and pay into the district treasury the amount of revenue due from the village; and for his services, he received an allowance called muqaddami which varied considerably in the different areas of the Delhi Territory. To facilitate the collection of revenue, each pargana was placed under the management of a native collector or tahsildar who received the revenue of the villages from the muqaddam and who was directly responsible to the Superintendent of the Revenues at Delhi.¹⁸³

181. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 12th Feb. 1807. No. 33
 182. Ibid 14th May. 1811. No. 28
 183. Ibid 11th Feb. 1808. No. 25

The right of Government to demand half the produce of the cultivated lands was everywhere recognised; and the main object in concluding a village settlement was to reach an agreement with the cultivators as to the value of their crops and thus to determine the amount of jama or land revenue each village should pay.¹⁸⁴ In disturbed areas where no records were available, Seton suggested that the land should be measured in the presence of Metcalfe or another European officer and the assessment made according to the value of the crops. Each village was also to appoint a Patwari who was to keep all records relating to the produce of the land and who was to attest all pottahs or leases granted to the ryots of the village.

During the latter part of 1806, Metcalfe concluded settlements of this kind with the villages of Havalli Palum. In the neighbourhood around Delhi, many villages had not been cultivated for thirty or forty years; and to encourage ryots to settle and cultivate the soil, he found it expedient to¹⁸⁵ make triennial settlements. He then went north to conclude similar settlements in Panipat, Sonipat, and Gunour. His task here was more difficult; for British authority had never been completely established in these parganas, and many

184. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 26th Feb. 1808. No. 32

185. Ibid. 12th Feb. 1807. No. 33

of the inhabitants had abandoned agriculture for plunder. Metcalfe found the zamindars refractory, often resisting a measurement of their lands; an almost complete dearth of authentic village records; and the muqaddams demanding a commission which in some places amounted to as much as a third of the revenue.¹⁸⁶ In his report to Seton, Metcalfe described the state of the northern parganas as "confused and unsatisfactory"¹⁸⁷ and stated that "nothing but the appearance of a military force --- would enable him to realise the public demand."¹⁸⁸ The Resident was thus obliged to send a battalion of native infantry to Sonipat "to awe the turbulent into a proper sense of their duty."¹⁸⁹ Nevertheless a triennial settlement was eventually made; and by 1810 Havalli Palum and the northern parganas were producing a revenue of Rs.1,68,469-6-3, an increase of Rs.76,693-0-4 on the amount paid to Government by the amil before the settlement.¹⁹⁰

The settlement in Mewat was made by the second assistant, William Fraser. This area, which comprised the parganas of Noh, Bohera, and Sonah, consisted of ranges of barren hills divided from each other by narrow but fruitful valleys.¹⁹¹

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| 186. | Bengal Revenue Consultations. | 2nd Oct.1807.No.21 |
| 187. | Ibid. | 12th Feb.1807.No.33 |
| 188. | Ibid. | 4th March.1807.No.52 |
| 189. | Ibid. | 16th April.1808.No.19 |
| 190. | Ibid. | 8th Feb.1811.No.34 |
| 191. | Ibid. | 3rd June.1808.No.33 |

Here Fraser made a triennial settlement which by 1810 was producing a revenue of Rs.89,738-10-0.¹⁹² Metcalfe was preparing to perform a similar task in the neighbouring district of Rewari when he was diverted to Lahore;¹⁹³ and Fraser eventually settled the area in 1809. The great landowner in Mewat and Rewari was Rao Tej Sing who had farmed out the district for many years. His lease expired in 1808; and Seton was anxious that in the districts not belonging to his istimrar, village settlements should be concluded. Metcalfe was doubtful whether it was advisable to settle an area such as Rewari where the riotous disposition of the people, the hitherto unchallenged influence of Rao Tej Sing and the proximity of such lawless states as Bharatpur and Macheri were factors likely to present difficulty.¹⁹⁴ The Governor-General in Council and the Resident, however, were both against the continuance of a system of land farming;¹⁹⁵ and Fraser was accordingly instructed to proceed with the settlement. Seton laid down the principle that the assessment was to be moderate, since it was "an object of infinitely greater importance to conciliate and attach the inhabitants than to obtain a heavy jumma."¹⁹⁶ Fraser concluded the settlement of Rewari to such good effect that

192. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 8th Feb.1811.No.34

193. Ibid. 28th Oct.1808.No.36.infra.p 93

194. Ibid. 10th June.1808.No.24

195. Ibid. 10th June.1808.No.26

196. Ibid. 3rd June.1808.No.33

the land revenue for the first year amounted to Rs.2,22,131-6-6, a sum which exceeded the amount paid by Rao Tej Sing by no less than Rs.1,41,160-6-0. "I cordially confess" wrote Seton, that "the result of his exertions has far exceeded my most sanguine hopes" 197

Thus by the end of 1810, all lands in the Delhi Territory which were not held as jagirs or as istimrars had been settled for a period of one, two, or three years; and the exertions of Seton and his assistants bore fruit in a greatly increased land revenue. The net amount for the whole territory in the year prior to Seton's departure was Rs.9,01,651-12-6. 198 It was an achievement of which he and his assistants felt justly proud; and a few weeks before leaving Delhi, he reported the state of the Assigned Lands to be "flourishing and improving; the inhabitants comfortable, contented, and happy." He even held out the hope of a considerable increase of revenue from the northern parganas should the Governor-General in Council decide to restore the canal which at one time flowed from Kurnal to Delhi and whose waters once irrigated the soil of Panipat, Sonipat, and Gunour. 199

With regard to the sayer or customs revenue, Seton made

197. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 19th January. 1810. No. 31

198. Ibid. 6th March. 1811. No. 58

199. Vide infra ch 4 pp 113 et seq

little headway. The complex system of transit duties and town dues inherited from former days needed drastic reform; but Seton was too occupied with land settlement and political affairs to attempt such^a task. Metcalfe, in 1807, described the Customs of Delhi as being "in an abominable state," and declared that a representation he had made on the subject "went no further than Seton's desk."²⁰⁰ Many years were to elapse²⁰¹ before the Delhi Customs were reorganised; and in the intervening period the system of farming the Customs to native collectors continued.²⁰² The sayer collections came under the general supervision of the Superintendent of the Revenues who received a commission of five per cent on the sale of spirituous liquors and drugs; and two and a half per cent on the remaining collections.²⁰³ In all, the sayer duties for the Delhi Territory in 1810 amounted to Rs.2,10,000, bringing the net revenue for that year to Rs.11,651-12-6.²⁰⁴

The Resident was well aware that the introduction of an effective police was the necessary complement of the work of revenue settlement; for in areas where disorder was rife, both cultivation and revenue collection were adversely affected. At

200. Letter to J.W.Sherer dated 27th Aug. 1807. Quoted in Kaye's "Life and Correspondence." vol.I. p.160

201. Vide infra. ch.6. p. 204.

202. There was, for instance, Luchman's monopoly of the sale of spirituous liquors in the city of Delhi. (Bengal Revenue Consultations. 27th Oct. 1809 No.50) and the farm of the Sayer Duties of Hariana to Roshun Chund in 1810 (Bengal Revenue Consultations. 6th March 1811 No.57)

203. Bengal Letters Received 21st Aug. 1806-(Revenue) para.46

204. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 6th March. 1811-No.58.

the end of 1809, therefore, Seton followed up the work of revenue settlement by sending his two assistants to establish effective police control in the newly-settled districts; Fraser going north²⁰⁵ to Kurnal and Gardner to Haryana.

In the early years of Seton's administration, law and order existed only in the larger towns. Elsewhere, highway-robbery and murder were wide-spread. In Kurnal, Fraser reported that robbery with violence was so common "that a general prosecution of any offences against law, short of murder, would have included the whole population."²⁰⁶ The situation was aggravated because native rulers whose lands bordered the Delhi Territory often abetted perpetrators of such crimes, giving shelter to gangs of marauders and sometimes even employing them. One such offender was the Rajah of Bharatpur whose subjects plundered Mewat and Rewari; and the Sikh chiefs to the north and west²⁰⁷ of Kurnal were equally culpable. The thick jungle and forest lands of the northern parganas afforded excellent cover for²⁰⁸ marauders, as did the hilly country to the south of Delhi.²⁰⁹ In areas such as these, the first step was to secure obedience to authority; and neither Fraser nor Gardner was able to

205. Bengal Political Consultations. 20th Feb. 1810. Nos. 39 & 40

206. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 16th April. 1811. No 40.

207. Bengal Political Consultations. 20th March. 1810. No. 68

208. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 16th April. 1811
No. 40

209. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 12th Feb. 1807. No. 32

210

accomplish this without recourse to military force. This confirmed Seton in his opinion that only by degrees could the police system of the older provinces be introduced into the Delhi Territory. In the more settled districts of the Regulation Provinces, daroghas or native police officers with their assistants were responsible to the district judge for the good order of the area; but Seton was convinced that for many years to come, a semi-military force would be needed to supplement the efforts of the native police in the Delhi Territory. It was mainly for this purpose that he urged the Governor General in Council to retain the Delhi najibs and Skinner's Irregular Horse, who could always be relied upon to reduce a rebellious district or to apprehend offenders.

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Once order had been established, the next step was to set up thanahs or police posts in the larger towns under the charge of a darogha who could call upon armed force in case of need. By the time of Seton's departure, police thanahs had been established in all the larger towns between Delhi and Kurnal; and Fraser reported that in these areas "perfect tranquility and subordination prevailed."

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The necessity of taking over Seton's duties at Delhi prevented Fraser from proceeding south-

- 210. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 6th March. 1811. No. 58
- 211. Bengal Political Consultations. 5th March. 1807. No. 90
- Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations. 19th March. 1807. No. 21
- 212. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 16th April. 1811
- Nos. 40 & 41

ward; and for the time being, public order in Mewat and Rewari continued to be in the hands of the tahsildars responsible for the collection of the revenues.²¹³ The hilly districts of Havalli Palum and Sonah were policed by native officers of the Rajah of Ballumgarh who held the pargana of Pali Pakul²¹⁴ on a light rent on condition that his servants patrolled the highway between Delhi and Agra, and kept under control the banditti who infested the hills around Chatterpur.

Both in Kurnal and Haryana, the Resident's assistants found that the most effective means of maintaining order and preventing crime was to hold the inhabitants of a village collectively responsible for crimes committed within its boundaries. Seton described this procedure as being "congenial to the habits of the people" and advocated its use both in Kurnal and Rewari. "I think it highly desirable," he wrote to Fraser, "that if an act of highway robbery or any other heinous offence be traced to a person who cannot be found, -----the village to which he belongs should either produce the culprit or-----make good the loss."²¹⁵ The revival of this ancient practice, common to most of the villages in the Delhi area, proved a ready means of apprehending criminals and recovering stolen property; and in so

213. Bengal Political Consultations. 6th Oct. 1809. Nos. 57 & 58.

214. Ibid. 12th Feb. 1807. No. 51

This arrangement held good until the death of Rajah Koonwas Raj Singh of Ballumgarh in 1826, after which Pali Pakul reverted to Government & the Delhi authorities took over police arrangements between Delhi & Balumgarh.

215. Bengal Political Consultations. 6th Oct. 1809. No. 57

far as it encouraged the maintenance of order by common consent of the community, it was bound to result eventually in a decrease of crime. In Hariana, Gardner introduced a similar plan with considerable success. Each village appointed its own watchmen who acted as local police and were responsible to the head of the village for the good conduct of its inhabitants. A small per centage of the village assessment was remitted for the support of the watch who could appeal to the local darogha for help if necessary. The Court of Directors approved this plan as being "simple, economical, and conformable with established custom," and suggested that it might prove effective in other areas.^{2I6}

Thus during Seton's administration, the framework of a system of police control was established in the parganas of the Delhi Territory. In the city of Delhi, a more detailed plan was necessary. During the years of British rule in Delhi, dwellers in the city had become accustomed to a regime of "security, comfort, and impartial justice;"^{2I7} with the result that the population had greatly increased and there was a rise in the value of real property. This increasing population, which was constantly being augmented by an influx of strangers from across the frontiers, made an effective police force essential for they were needed to regulate the bazaars, quell petty affrays

2I6. Bengal Despatches. 6th January. 1815. para. 73

2I7. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 3rd. June. 1808.
No. 10

in the streets, and prevent encroachments and trespass upon land.

Seton considered the control and co-ordination of the police both within the city and throughout the countryside to be so necessary that he asked for the appointment of a European²¹⁸ to be Superintendent of the Police. His request led to a reorganisation of the work of the Residency; for the Governor General in Council was not prepared to delegate so important a task to an uncovenanted servant, and suggested that the business of the Residency should be remodelled so that the assistants could undertake both revenue and police duties. As a result, the office of Superintendent of the Revenues at Delhi was abolished; the Resident's first assistant, who was to be paid an increased salary of Rs.1184 a month, becoming responsible²¹⁹ for this branch of administration. No specific provision was made for the superintendence of the police; but the second assistant was to officiate as "Magistrate of the City of Delhi and its environs" at a salary of Rs.750 a month. A third assistant was to help the Resident in the political department and be available for any miscellaneous duties which his senior colleagues might be unable to perform. This decision prevented a too rigid departmentalism in the administration of the Delhi Territory; for though it was customary to give revenue and judicial duties to different assistants, the Governor General made it clear that on occasion all three assistants could be

218. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 3rd June 1808.No.10

219. Ibid. No.II Governor-General's Resolution of 3rd June 1808.

used wherever they might be needed. They were, in fact, to function as assistants to the Resident rather than as heads of departments; the Resident himself retaining responsibility for all branches of the administration and allocating to his assistants their various duties.

The delegation of the second assistant to act as magistrate in the city of Delhi lifted much of the detail of judicial work from the Resident, though he continued to deal in person with the more important cases in the criminal and civil courts. Pressure of other business prevented Seton from complying with the request that he would prepare a plan for the administration of justice at Delhi;²²⁰ and all he could report on this issue was that the criminal courts were working in accordance with the instructions laid down by Government on 23rd May 1805, and that in civil cases he had endeavoured to act "in the spirit of the judicial code enacted for the Ceded and Conquered Provinces, respect being-----paid to the local habits and established usages, and to the rights and privileges of His Majesty the King of Delhi."²²¹

That pressure of political business should have prevented Seton from elaborating a plan for judicial procedure was not surprising; for besides daily attendance at the palace, and the general supervision of revenue and police administration, it was one of the Resident's prime responsibilities to keep the Governor General informed of the constantly changing political

220. Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations. 30th. March. 1810. No. 10

221. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. ~~21st April. 1810. No.~~

19th May 1810 No. 31.

situation in Rajputana and north-west India. Native newswriters, paid by the Resident, gathered information; and from their reports, Seton supplied the Governor-General with such intelligence as he deemed necessary. In a land where rumour and intrigue abounded, discrimination was difficult; and it was easy to give too great a credence to newswriters' accounts of hostile combinations of Maratha and Rajput chiefs against the British Government. Barlow, who was convinced that the power of Sindia and Holkar had been so effectively curbed by the treaties of 1805 and 1806 that neither singly nor in combination could they menace British authority, thought Seton over-estimated the danger from this source;²²² but the Governor General ignored the fact that these two chiefs were still sufficiently powerful to wreak their will on lesser states which, by the same treaties, were deprived of the Company's protection. During the early years of Seton's administration, the depredations of Sindia, Holkar, and Amir Khan kept the lands bordering the Delhi Territory in a state of constant turmoil; and yet, in accordance with the Government's policy of non-intervention, Seton was obliged to turn a deaf ear to all pleas for protective alliances.²²³ Barlow was determined that the Company should not be drawn into any dispute which might lead to war; and it was Seton's duty to deter states such as Bharatpur and Macheri;

222. Bengal Secret Consultations. 25th Sep. 1806. No. 67

223. Bengal Letters Received. 24th March. 1807. para. 2

who had treaty relations with the Company, from quarrelling with each other and to prevent them ²²⁴from intervening in the disputes of their Rajput neighbours.

Time was to show that this policy was untenable. Lord Minto adhered to it less rigidly than his predecessor; and by 1810, the anarchy which existed in the states across the Delhi frontiers drew from the Governor General a declaration that the Government's desire "to maintain relations of peace and amity with all the states of Hindustan" would not preclude them from resisting "projects of violence -----on the part of any state or leader calculated to expose to danger the tranquility and security ²²⁵of either our own dominions or those of our allies." This pronouncement pointed to a change of policy which was to come ²²⁶to fruition in the time of Lord Hastings; but as early as 1808, within a year of Lord Minto's arrival in India, events in Europe and north-west India caused an important departure from the policy so emphatically laid down by the Court of Directors and implemented by Sir George Barlow in 1806.

The modification of policy was brought about by the aggressive actions of Ranjit Singh of Lahore and by the revival of French schemes to subvert British power in north-west India. The

224. Bengal Letters Received. 16th February. 1807. paras. 23-26

225. Bengal Political Consultations. 16th June. 1810. No. 40

226. Vide infra. ch. 4 p.p. 137 - 145

danger zone lay to the north-west of Delhi, in the lands inhabited by the Sikh chiefs between the Jumna and the Sutlej Rivers; and Seton was entrusted with the task of bringing these chiefs and their territories within the British sphere of influence. Before Minto had come to this decision, the aggressive actions of Ranjit Singh south of the Sutlej against the Rajahs of Patiala, Kythal, and Nabha, had caused these Sikh chiefs to approach Seton in the spring of 1808 in the hope of obtaining British protection. At the same time, through his vakils at Delhi, Ranjit Singh tried to find out how far the British Government considered its power to extend northwards beyond Kurnal.²²⁷ As Minto was, at this juncture, considering a radical alteration of policy owing to the intelligence he had received of a French plan to invade India through the Punjab,²²⁸ Seton was told to give an evasive reply both to the Sikh chiefs²²⁹ and to Ranjit Singh.

The information received by the Governor General concerned the growth of French influence in Turkey and Persia after Russia had signed the Treaty of Tilsit with Napoleon: and the threat to India was sufficiently dangerous to cause Minto to send Colonel Malcolm to Teheran to counteract French designs in Persia, and to plan similar missions for Kabul and Lahore. In the event

227. Bengal Secret & Separate Consultations. 21st March. 1808. No. 30
 228. Ibid. 21st March. 1808. No. 32
 229. Ibid. 2nd May. 1808. No. 18

of a French invasion of India by way of Persia and Afghanistan, the territories of Ranjit Singh and of the Sikh chiefs would be of strategic importance; and Minto was anxious to maintain friendly relations with both parties. Hence the evasive reply which Seton was asked to return to their overtures.

Ranjit Singh, however, was already across the Sutlej in the direction of Hardwar, and the situation would not admit delay.

Minto readily adopted Seton's suggestion that Metcalfe should meet Ranjit Singh to find out if he would be inimical to a British embassy proceeding through the Punjab to Kabul. ²³⁰

At the same time, Seton was directed to allay the apprehensions of the Sikh chiefs who might fear that the Governor General was preparing to hand them over to the mercies of the Rajah of Lahore.

In the critical situation which ensued, Seton was obliged to act on his own initiative without waiting for further instructions. He promised British protection to the Sikh chiefs on his own responsibility; for he saw no other way of reconciling them to the advance of British troops through their territory and of securing their allegiance. ²³¹ On receiving news that Ranjit Singh had forced several Sikh chiefs, including the Rajah of Patiala, to submit to him and place their territories

230. Bengal Secret & Separate Consultations. 4th April. 1808. No. 8

231. Ibid.

26th Dec. 1808. NO. 17

at his disposal, Lord Minto took action. He instructed Mountstuart Elphinstone to proceed to Kabul; and he sent Metcalfe to Lahore; while British troops under Ochterlony marched north to establish a military post at Ludhiana on the Sutlej. ²³² Minto also confirmed Seton's offer of British protection to the Sikh chiefs; and Metcalfe was instructed to inform Ranjit Singh of this decision. ²³³ The situation became less critical when Minto received intelligence from London that a French invasion of India was becoming less likely; and the news also enabled Metcalfe to adopt a more decisive tone at Lahore. In April 1809, he brought his mission to a successful conclusion by inducing Ranjit Singh to sign the Treaty of Amritsar whereby he renounced supremacy over the Cis-Sutlej Sikhs and their lands south of the Jumna, and agreed to restore all the territory he had conquered in this area. To give reassurance to the Sikh chiefs that they need fear no further aggression from Ranjit Singh, Minto issued a proclamation in which he not only guaranteed British protection against their enemies but proclaimed their freedom to manage their internal affairs without British interference. The frontier post at Ludhiana was retained as a sub-station of the Delhi Residency. It was placed in the charge of Ochterlony who, under the Resident at Delhi, became responsible for the management of all matters affecting the Protected Sikh States.

232. Bengal Secret and Separate Consultations. 14th Nov. 1808. No. 5

233. Griffin, L.H. "The Rajahs of the Panjab". pp. 177 et seq.

While pressure from events in Europe caused the Sikh states to be brought within the British sphere of influence, the extension of the war against the French to the Dutch possessions in the eastern seas led to Seton's departure from Delhi. Early in 1811 he accepted Minto's proposal that he should accompany him on the British expedition against Java and become the Governor of Prince Edward Island.²³⁴ Thus Seton's period of office at Delhi came to an end. For five years he had administered the affairs of the Delhi Territory and had shaped them so that they bore the impress of his handling as long as the Delhi Territory remained a separate entity. Not only had he greatly added to its extent by the incorporation of Hariana, but the system of land settlement which he introduced had increased its revenues four-fold. His work in this field alone would entitle Seton to a place among the great administrators of Delhi; but he had, in addition, borne the brunt of Akbar's challenge to the Company's authority, and had pursued faithfully a policy towards the royal house of Delhi which he must have found as uncongenial as it was unrewarding. Nor did Seton quit Delhi without leaving behind some tangible evidence of his care and affection for the city. The walls and bastions which the attacks of Holkar and the Marathas had left in a ruinous state were restored and strengthened,²³⁵ as were the palace

234. Bengal Secret & Separate Consultations. 9th March. 1811. No 1
(Governor General's Minute of 25th Feb. 1811.)

235. Bengal Secret Consultations. 9th Oct. 1806. No. 13

gates which he had been obliged to blow open in the tumultuous
²³⁶
 days of Jehangir's revolt: and owing to his private generosity,
 the Chandni Chowk - the principal street leading from the palace
 to the Lahore gate - was once more shaded by trees as it had
²³⁷
 been in the days of Shah Jehan.

It was not without regret that Seton consented to leave
 Delhi; and Minto agreed that he should return to the Residency
²³⁸
 when his services were no longer needed on Prince Edward Island.
 Consequently on 21st February 1811 he delivered the charge of
 the Residency to Fraser, pending the arrival of Charles Metcalfe
²³⁹
 from Hyderabad. In effect, however, his departure was final;
 for when he returned to India a year later, it was not to Delhi
 that he proceeded but to Calutta, as a member of the Governor
 General's Council.

- 236. Bengal Letters Received. 27th December. 1809. para. 62.
- 237. Bengal Political Consultations. 9th March. 1811. No. 49.
- 238. Minto's Letter to Metcalfe of 26th Feb. 1811. Quoted by
 Kaye in "Life & Correspondence". vol. I. p. 233
- 239. Bengal Political Consultations. 9th March 1811. No. 57.

Chapter 4.

The Administration of the Delhi Territory under Charles Metcalfe 1811 to 1818.

Metcalfe arrived in Delhi to take up his post as Resident in May 1811^I and he continued in office until the end of 1818.² These were momentous years in India and in Europe; and they provided the twenty-six year old Resident with opportunities to enhance the reputation he had already gained as a diplomatist, and to achieve a place among the great administrators of India.

The close of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 had certain important repercussions on British policy in India which affected Metcalfe and the territory he ruled. The downfall of Napoleon finally removed all fear of a French invasion of India; and relieved those responsible for the security of the British possessions in Hindustan from an anxiety which had dogged British policy for more than a decade. It was also in part responsible for a subtle change in the British attitude to the King of Delhi which became apparent during the latter half of Metcalfe's residency. The possession of the person of the Mughal Emperor was no longer the valuable asset it had been in the days of Wellesley; and the projected removal of the royal family from Delhi to a less vulnerable part of India ceased

1. Bengal Political Consultations. 31st May. 1811 No. 59.
2. Ibid. 9th Jan. 1819. No. 24.

to be an object of British policy. The recognition of the British Crown as the paramount sovereign authority in India³ by the European nations at Vienna in 1815 also reacted adversely on any pretensions to sovereign power put forth by the King of Delhi. Nor did Akbar's claims receive sympathetic consideration from Lord Moira, whose appointment as Governor General in 1813 occurred at a time when influences such as these were becoming pronounced. Within India during the years of Metcalfe's residency, British power was challenged by such events as the war with Nepal, the depredations of the Pindaris, and the final rally of the Maratha princes: but by 1818, British authority had been vindicated, and the independent chiefs whose lands bordered the Delhi Territory had been brought into subordinate alliance with the East India Company. In times such as these, there was ample scope for the cool judgment and diplomatic ability of Charles Metcalfe who became the Governor-General's chief instrument in negotiating the treaties⁴ of alliance with the states of central India.

3. Cambridge History of India. vol. v. pp. 603-605. & the Cambridge Shorter History of India. pp. 684. et seq.
4. Many of Metcalfe's achievements during this period have been dealt with by his biographers, John William Kaye and Edward Thompson, and more recently by Dr. Percival Spear. My object in this chapter is not to repeat work which has already been done, but rather to emphasise and in some instances to elaborate the contribution Metcalfe made to the development of British administration in the Delhi Territory.

Metcalfe was no stranger to the delicate and difficult relations which existed between the Resident and the court of Delhi. By temperament he had less sympathy and certainly less patience with the pretensions of the King than had his predecessor. He would gladly have ignored the intrigues which emanated from the palace, and confined his intercourse with Akbar to issues of major importance. "I think it best to treat these intrigues⁵ as trifles;" he wrote, soon after taking office at Delhi. "they cannot be stopped while the King's ear is open to any nonsense poured into it on particular subjects; and they are made unnecessarily important when they become the cause of serious discussions." But the Resident was not long able to maintain this detached attitude; for Metcalfe had not been many weeks in Delhi before news arrived from Calcutta which called for his immediate intervention. The Persian Secretary to the Government reported that a person called Raja Babu Pran Krisen, who possessed credentials from Akbar and claimed to be his ambassador, had arrived in the presidency bearing three letters from the King of Delhi addressed respectively to the Governor-General, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Judicature, and to King George III of England.⁶ These documents not only adverted to matters which Akbar had previously laid before Minto, but they were the first indication

5. Bengal Political Consultations. 2nd Aug. 1811. No. 85.

6. Ibid. 26th July. 1811. Nos. 105

of the King's intention to plead his cause outside India. The letters contained an outspoken indictment of the conduct of the late Resident.⁷ Akbar attributed Jehangir's exile and the enforced acknowledgement of Abu Zafar as heir apparent not to the policy of the Governor-General in Council but to the machinations of Seton whose dismissal and punishment were demanded. Pran Krisen was the second emissary to arrive in Calcutta since the mission of Shah Haji; and it was evident to the Governor-General in Council that no trust could be placed on Akbar's promises to refrain from such actions. Metcalfe was accordingly instructed to remonstrate with the King and point out the futility of such proceedings. To emphasise the displeasure of Government, Pran Krisen was dismissed from the Presidency in disgrace. He had used his credentials to obtain widespread financial credit; and before his departure from Calcutta, he was publicly divested of his commission before the assembled vakils of the courts of Hindustan.⁸

At Delhi, Metcalfe's anger was aroused by Akbar's attack on Seton. In his despatch to the Governor-General, he referred to the language used of Seton in the King's letter as "strange, unwarrantable, unjust, and absurd;" and stated bluntly that the "degree of feeling, kindness, and deference" which Seton invariably showed towards Akbar "deserved a very different return."⁹ In accordance with his official instructions, Metcalfe

7. Bengal Political Consultations. 26th July. 1811. Nos. 106-108

8. Bengal Letters Received. 1st March. 1812. paras 95-100

9. Bengal Political Consultations. 20th August. 1811. No. 44

sought an interview with the King, " and in a respectful but unreserved manner " informed him of the Governor-General's displeasure. Akbar expressed contrition and promised amendment, and for a few months all seemed well: " they go on very quietly in the palace " wrote the Resident,¹⁰ " Jehangir amuses himself as well as he can and gives me no trouble."

It was not in the nature of things, however, that Akbar should refrain from intrigue or that Jehangir should remain quiescent: and within a year, Metcalfe was again obliged to intervene when Akbar attempted to intrigue with the court of Lucknow. The failure of the King's attempt to carry his grievances to England or to obtain further concessions from the Governor-General caused Akbar to make clandestine overtures to the Nawab Vazir of Oudh for assistance against the British. The scheme originated in a request that Jehangir should be allowed to reside at some other place within the Company's territory than Delhi. It was pleaded that the Prince's former residence at Allahabad had given him such a liking "for English manners and English freedom" that he found the stricter¹¹ etiquette of the royal palace at Delhi irksome. Metcalfe was well aware that the King's apparent agreement to be separated from his favourite son sprang from ulterior motives, but the Resident was loth to forego the opportunity

10. Bengal Political Consultations. 20th August. 1811. No. 44.

11. Ibid. 10th Jan. 1812. No. 87.

of freeing Delhi from Jehangir's disturbing presence. After warning the Governor-General that mischief was afoot, Metcalfe agreed that the Prince's desire was " indubitably sincere " and recommended that the request should be granted. Permission was accordingly given for Jehangir to live at Allahabad, the only stipulation being that the Prince should not return to Delhi without the previous sanction of the Governor-General. ¹²

Jehangir was thus free to prosecute the King's designs at ¹³ Lucknow. He announced his intention of attending the wedding of a relative ^{of} Farrukhabad; and by an unwarranted use of the Governor-General's name, travelled unmolested as far as ¹⁴ Cawnpore. At this juncture, Major Baillie, the Resident at Lucknow, intervened; and produced shugas from Akbar to the Nawab Vazir in which the King admitted that the real object of Jehangir's visit was to enlist the help of the court of Lucknow to " procure an amelioration of his condition from the ¹⁵ authorities of Calcutta and London." Angered by the " ingratitude, deceit, and calumny " displayed by the King, the Governor-General in Council determined to take stern measures.

12. Bengal Political Consultations. 10th Jan. 1812. No. 88

13. There was also a projected visit of Qudsia Begam, Akbar's mother, to her son Suliman Shekoh at Lucknow which had a similar motive.

Bengal Political Consultations. 11th Dec. 1812. Nos. 1 & 2.

14. Bengal Letters Received. 15th June. 1813. paras 259 et seq.

15. Ibid. 1st Oct. 1813. paras 209 - 211.

The addition to the royal stipend sanctioned in 1809 was suspended; and Jehangir was sent back to Allahabad with his freedom considerably curtailed.^{I6}

Metcalf was instructed to inform the King of Government's displeasure and to point out to Akbar the consequences of his folly. The ensuing interview was painful both to the Resident and the King. Metcalfe presented a written communication which was brusque and to the point. "The money which was in Your Majesty's Treasury has been profusely squandered"---,"he wrote.^{I7} "Your Majesty's stipend is reduced, and Your Majesty's favourite son is suffering inconvenience and disgrace. It grieves my heart to see what degradation Your Majesty has brought on yourself." The Resident had certainly laid aside the customary mode of ceremonious address! Metcalfe also gave a vivid picture of the King's remorse, and described how "he called himself a fool; he called himself a wretch; he pulled his own ears in token of deserving punishment and humbled himself in a manner which it was painful to see and which it is distressing to relate." The episode had two further consequences. It brought home to Metcalfe and to the Governor General the need for a closer personal intercourse between the Resident and the King, and Metcalfe was asked to hold more frequent inter-views with Akbar.^{I8} It also led to the permanent exclusion of

I6. Bengal Letters Received. 1st Oct. 1813. paras. 209--211

I7. Bengal Political Consultations. 30th April. 1813. No. 4

I8. Ibid. 23rd Dec. 1813. No. 4

Jehangir from Delhi; and in spite of the King's persistent requests for his return,¹⁹ the Prince continued to reside at Allahabad. till his death in 1821. The King's contrition and obvious desire to regain the favour of the Governor General led to the royal allowance being restored; but the occasion was used to persuade Akbar to make a more adequate provision for the numerous collateral branches of the royal family who were living within the precincts of the palace on an allowance "extremely inadequate even to their bare subsistence."²⁰

Such was the situation between the Government and the court of Delhi when Moira came out to India in October 1813. With the departure of Minto went much of the tolerant forbearance which so far had characterised the treatment of the royal family of Delhi. Moira's "clear conviction of the impolicy of keeping up the notion of a paramountship in the King of Delhi"²¹ was in keeping with Metcalfe's attitude to the King; and when the Governor-General visited the Upper Provinces in the winter of 1814-1815, he refused to pay his respects to Akbar at Delhi unless the King waived "the servile obeisance" demanded by the ceremonial of the court which implied "His Majesty's being liege lord of the British possessions."²² This Akbar was not prepared to do, despite Metcalfe's solicitations; and so Moira

19. Bengal Political Consultations. 10th July. 1818. No. 78

20. Bengal Letters Received. 31st March. 1814. para 175.

21. Bute, Marchioness Of - "The private journal of the Marquis of Hastings". 22nd January. 1815. p. 172.

22. Hastings' Private Journal. 22nd January. 1815. p. 172.

did not visit Delhi. Instead, he despatched his Secretaries on a deputation to the King; but was careful to instruct them to present the customary ~~nears~~ on their own behalf and not as from the Governor-General. "This custom I have abrogated" wrote Moira,²³ "considering such public testimony of dependence and subservience as irreconcilable to any rational policy." The Governor-General was convinced that the time had come to show plainly by word and deed that the sovereign power in India no longer resided, even nominally, in the King of Delhi but had passed irrevocably to the Company as representing the British Crown. Accordingly the Governor-General, who had been created Marquis of Hastings in 1816, ordered that the phrase on his seal²⁴ proclaiming him the servant of the Emperor should be deleted and that native chiefs should be encouraged to seek investiture and confirmation of their titles from the British Government²⁵ rather than from the court of Delhi.

The fact that the Nawab Vazir had delivered Akbar's shuqa to Major Baillie at the time of Jehangir's projected visit to Lucknow in 1813 was an indication that the ruler of Oudh was not prepared to imperil his relations with the British for the sake of any obligation he might be presumed to owe to the King of Delhi. Neither the Governor-General nor Metcalfe were indifferent to the significance of this action; the sequel

23. Hasting's Private Journal. 25th January. 1815. p. 173.

24. Cambridge History of India. vol. 5. p. 605.

25. Bengal Secret Consultations. 24th January. 1815. No. 33.

to which came at the end of Metcalfe's residency when the Nawab Vazir was encouraged to assume the title of the King of Oudh. This open flouting of any nominal allegiance to the King of Delhi was received with the greatest indignation and sense of injury at the court of Delhi, Akbar himself interpreting this action as a reprisal by the British for his refusal to meet Hastings as an equal in 1815.

It is thus apparent that during Metcalfe's residency, relations between the King of Delhi and the government at Calcutta altered fundamentally. Events such as the open defection of the court of Lucknow influenced even the inner circle of the palace. Whilst it would be untrue to say that Akbar and his advisers acquiesced in their loss of power and their ancient dignities, at least it was brought home to them that their glory had departed, though they still sought means whereby it might one day be restored. This decline in the relative strength of the King's position during the seven years of Metcalfe's residency at Delhi was due, in large measure, to the close agreement of the Governor-General and the Resident, both of whom were convinced that British supremacy must be openly declared and re-inforced; even at the cost of permanently antagonising the King of Delhi.

The tour of Hastings in the winter of 1814-1815 was the occasion of his meeting with Metcalfe who was invited to spend Christmas and the early weeks of the new year in the Governor-General's camp.²⁷ The meeting was auspicious in that the Governor-General found in Metcalfe one whose outlook and judgment marched with his own, and whose knowledge of upper India was unsurpassed even by members of his own Council. It is no exaggeration to say that in the eventful years between 1815 and 1823, no one stood higher in the Governor-General's esteem than the Resident of Delhi; even though Hastings did not prevail upon Metcalfe to exchange his residency for a post on the Governor-General's staff where his advice would be more readily available.²⁸

The Governor-General and Resident were both aware of the critical state of central India, and both thought that the time had come when the situation must be tackled. Metcalfe had long been awaiting the opportunity to translate into action measures which, from long experience, he was convinced were fundamental - not only to the safety and good government of the Delhi Territory - but to the whole of central India and Hindustan. In the days ahead, when Hastings's plans were impeded by criticism from members of his Council and by the delaying orders of the Court of Directors, he found comfort in

27. Hastings's Private Journal. vol.I. pp.170 - 180.

28. Kaye "Life and Correspondence." vol.I.pp.400-409.

Metcalf's wisdom and support.

The political aspect of Metcalfe's residency at Delhi has become part of the wider history of India; and in so far as it concerns the development of the Delhi Territory, it is dealt with in the latter part of this chapter. Metcalfe's immediate task on his return from the Governor-General's camp in 1815 was to complete two reports on the internal administration of the area under his control. The first of these dated 4th September 1815 dealt with the revenue system; the second dated 12th December 1815 was a more general report on the administration of the Delhi Territory, with special reference to the working of the judicial courts, the police, and some miscellaneous reforms which Metcalfe had introduced. These two reports, compiled at Hastings's request, gave a detailed picture of the working of the administration of the Delhi Territory and have been extensively used by Metcalfe's biographers.

29. Kaye "Life and Correspondence".vol.I.p.384.

30. Referred to in this thesis as Metcalfe's Revenue Report.1815

31. " " " " " Metcalfe's Judicial Report.1815.

32. In April 1814, the Governor General had asked all administrators in charge of districts in the Bengal Presidency to furnish him with information under the headings, revenue, police, civil and miscellaneous matters; and upon the information thus furnished, he had based his reports to the Court of Directors contained in his Revenue Minute of 21st September 1815 and his Judicial Minute of 2nd October 1815. Metcalfe's Reports did not reach the Governor General in time to be included in this survey of the administrative system of the Bengal Presidency; but Hastings commended Metcalfe's Revenue Report to the Directors for their special consideration on the grounds that it was "so perfect in every respect -- so replete with the soundest principles" - Hastings's Revenue Minute. § 200.

To summarise the substance of these documents would be to repeat work which has been done elsewhere. For the purpose of this thesis, they are used to throw light on some important revenue and judicial decisions which Metcalfe made and which influenced the future of the Delhi administration. By 1815 Metcalfe had been at Delhi long enough to consolidate the revenue and judicial systems which he found operating and to add something of his own; but it needs to be emphasised that the main structure of the administration was Seton's work, a fact³³ which Metcalfe was the first to acknowledge but which tends to be over-looked by Metcalfe's biographers.

When Metcalfe took office as Resident of Delhi in 1811, he found that the revenue system which, as a young assistant he had helped to inaugurate, had assumed definite shape though it³⁴ was by no means uniform throughout the Delhi Territory. Except in Haryana, village settlements for periods of three to five years were the general rule; and only occasionally ~~was~~ ^{were} zamindars recalcitrant. The position of the muqaddams and their allowances had become stabilised; and their efficiency in realising the Government's demand from their villages had³⁵ borne fruit in a steadily increasing revenue. One urgent question however, awaited the new Resident's decision. Many

33. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 2nd July. 1811. No. 43. para. 20
 (and Metcalfe's Revenue Report. para 26.)
 34. Ibid. 2nd July. 1811. No. 43. para. 43.
 35. Vide Supra chapter. 3. pp. 82 et seq.

of the original settlements made during Seton's time were coming to an end; and Metcalfe was asked to report on the expediency of introducing into the Delhi Territory a permanent settlement similar to that which existed in the Bengal regulation provinces.³⁶

From the first Metcalfe was averse to the idea, though as a new-comer he made the cautious reply that "on the subject of the introduction of a permanent settlement, I do not possess sufficient information to enable me to hazard an opinion with regard to the time it will be expedient."³⁷ His main objection was that he did not see how such a system would work in the Delhi Territory without destroying the basis of village economy upon which Seton had built when he concluded settlements with the hereditary cultivators of the soil. Unlike the Bengal provinces, there existed in the Delhi Territory no class of great landowners with whom revenue settlements could be made; and as early as 1811 Metcalfe was declaring that "the only right of property in the soil that exists in these districts originally belongs to the village zamindars ---- to the mass of cultivators ---- . To convert the muqaddams who seem to be representatives into maliks would, I apprehend, destroy the rights of the zamindars."³⁸ As a result of this

36. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 14th May. 1811. No. 29

37. Ibid. 2nd July. 1811. No. 43

38. Ibid. 14th May. 1811. No. 29

plea Metcalfe was authorised to conclude settlements with the
village zamindars for periods of two years.³⁹

Metcalfe's faith in the system of village settlements and his dislike of any measure likely to impinge on it increased with the years;⁴⁰ and in his revenue report of 1815, he definitely objected to the introduction of a permanent settlement and to any infringement of the proprietary rights of the village

zamindars.⁴¹ "The permanent settlement established in Bengal," he wrote, "has been objected to on the ground that by erecting a new order of great land proprietors that never existed before, we actually robbed millions of established hereditary property which had been possessed by their ancestors not only for centuries but for thousands of years. Of the justice of the objection as applied to Bengal, etcetera, I am not competent to judge; but the injustice which is above described would really take place in the Delhi Territory if it were parcelled out in large estates, and consigned in property to a few great land proprietors of our own creation."⁴²

On two other points Metcalfe was equally emphatic. He hoped that the practice of selling lands to pay for arrears of revenue would never be introduced into the Delhi Territory; and he advocated that wherever possible the village zamindars should pay their revenue

- 39. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 2nd July. 1811. No. 44
- 40. Vide Spear. "Twilight of the Mughals" pp. 87 et seq.
- 41. Revenue Report. para. 166
- 42. Revenue Report. paras. 83 & 84.

assessment through their representatives the muqaddams without
 the intervention of any middlemen.⁴³ Finally, although
 Metcalfe objected to any form of permanent settlement, he
 strongly urged that settlements should be made for long periods
 of twenty years or longer; " at all events --- sufficiently
 long to admit of considerable profit being made by cultivators
 from their own labour and enterprise."⁴⁴ Only thus, he thought,
 would cultivators of the soil be contented and Government
 revenue be realised.

The most formidable argument against a permanent settlement
 came from the Court of Directors who opposed its introduction
 into the Delhi Territory on the grounds that such a system
 made no allowance for future improvement in the productivity
 of the soil.⁴⁵ For instance, should the Delhi Canal be re-
 opened, the value of the lands irrigated by it would greatly
 increase. For these reasons, and also because Metcalfe was
 able to press the matter personally with the Governor-General
 in 1815, no permanent settlement was introduced into the Delhi
 Territory. The village zamindars were left in undisturbed
 possession of their hereditary rights; and the revenue system
 of Delhi was preserved to become a model for later revenue
 settlements in the North-West Provinces wherever similar
 village communities existed.⁴⁶ It was one of Metcalfe's most

43. Revenue Report. paras 106-109.

44. Ibid. para. 134.

45. Bengal Despatches - Revenue - 29th Jan. 1813. paras. 6-9.

46. Kaye - "Life & Correspondence " vol. I. p. 269.

far-reaching contributions to Indian administration.

The question of re-opening the Delhi Canal was closely bound up with revenue assessments in the Delhi Territory. It had been mooted by Seton soon after his arrival in Delhi; for so great was its potential value that in 1807, a European residing in Delhi had applied to Seton for permission to form a company to promote the project.⁴⁷ Though unwilling to grant proprietary rights in such an undertaking to a private individual, Government was not at this juncture prepared to do more than sanction a survey of the bed of the ancient canal.⁴⁸ Interest in Feroz Shah's canal was aroused when Haryana came under British control; and in 1810 Seton wrote that much "immediate benefit might be derived from reopening "this branch of the canal."⁴⁹ There the matter rested until Metcalfe returned to Delhi. A few months

47. Bengal Political consultations. 7th May. 1807 - Seton to Dowdeswell. 6th April. 1807.

48. The ancient canal of Delhi, the Nahr Fyz or Canal of Abundance, was made by Ali Mardan, a Persian nobleman of the court of Shah Jehan. It ran parallel to the Jumna for 85 miles from its head-waters in the Sikh Country north of Kurnal to the city of Delhi. Branches to the west flowed through Rohitak into Haryana, and further west still past Hansi and Hissar. The westward system of canals was called Feroz Shah's canal to distinguish it from the main canal of Ali Mardan. (see map.) - Bengal Political Consultations. 11th September. 1807. No. 12; 28th July 1810, Nos 40 - 42. and Home Miscellaneous Series. vol. 506.A.

49. Bengal Political Consultations. 4th July. 1810. No. 40.

after his arrival, he re-opened the question with Government, declaring that it was "impossible to live at Delhi without feeling an anxious and incessant desire for the accomplishment of such an object: ⁵⁰ but it was not until Hastings visited the regions through which the ancient canal once flowed that its re-opening became a matter of vital moment. In his journal, the Governor-General described how the project took shape in his mind. "I traced for a considerable distance the vestiges of the ancient canal of Ali Mardan Khan," he wrote on 5th January ⁵¹ 1815. "Its object was to fertilise the long tract of country from its source to its termination; in which extent no tolerable water is to be produced but by sinking wells to such an enormous depth as is beyond the compass of ordinary funds. --- The stream of the Jumna in running through this country becomes so tainted that the necessity of drinking it at Delhi since the canal has been destroyed has produced great unhealthiness in the city ---- On a rough estimate, the engineers compute that three lakhs of rupees would suffice to put the whole canal in perfect condition ---- I have determined on undertaking the repair immediately." On his journey westwards, the Governor-General came upon traces of Feroz Shah's Canal and declared his

50. Bengal Political Consultations. 25th January. 1812. No. 32.

51. "Private Journal" pp. 151 - 153.

intention " to dispossess the lion⁵²s by re-establishing the villages " of Haryana. The Governor-General lost no time in putting the work of restoration in hand; and after two years' further survey of the bed of the canal, the work of re-⁵³construction began in May 1817. Water did not flow into Delhi until 1821 after Metcalfe had left the city; but Hastings ranked the re-opening of the Delhi canal as one of the great⁵⁴ public works of his administration.

The beneficial effects of the waters of the canal did not affect the revenue assessments of the lands irrigated by it during Metcalfe's first residency; but even without the increased fertility of the canal lands, Metcalfe's returns for the years 1815 to 1818 show a great increase in revenue. When he took office in 1811, the net revenue of the Delhi Territory after all charges had been deducted was approximately 9 lakhs of rupees:⁵⁵ by 1818, this revenue had more than doubled.

52. "Private Journal" vol.I P 173.

53. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 9th May. 1817. Nos. 48 & 49.

54. Lord Hastings, "Summary of the Administration of the Indian Government. October 1813 to January 1823." pp. 98 & 99.

55. Net Revenue of the Delhi Territory after all charges were deducted in

1811-1812 was Rs 9,04,557 - Bengal Revenue Consultations. 19th February 1814. No. 57.

1812 -1813	was	Rs. 12,98,009.	Bengal Rev. Cons.	5th. Nov. 1814	No. 59.
1813-1814	" "	Rs. 14,74,255.	" " " "	5th. Nov. 1814.	No. 59.
1814-1815	" "	Rs. 13,53,154.	" " " "	14th. Nov. 1815.	No. 68.
1815-1816	" "	Rs. 15,73,206.	" " " "	21st Feb. 1816.	No. 60.
1816-1817	" "	Rs. 18,55,130.	" " " "	19th. Mar. 1819.	No. 109.
1817-1818	" "	Rs. 21,96,405.	" " " "	" " " "	" "

The newly-settled province of Hariana had become so peaceable by 1813 that Metcalfe saw no reason why its revenues should continue to be administered separately;⁵⁶ and when Government confirmed the triennial settlement, Hariana was incorporated in the general revenue administration of the Delhi Territory.⁵⁷

Apart from slight reverses, revenue from both land and customs showed a progressive increase between 1811 and 1818; and by 1814 it was sufficient to support the entire expense of the administration, including the King's stipend.⁵⁸ Not only Metcalfe, but the authorities in London and Calcutta expressed satisfaction. The disquieting factor was the widening gap between the land assessment and the amount collected. On 1st July 1812, the out-standing balance was Rs.10.073:⁵⁹ by 1818 it had increased to Rs.2,68,797. The Court of Directors hinted that this might be due to over-assessment and suggested an investigation.⁶⁰ In later years, Metcalfe was to admit that their fears were well-founded.⁶¹

56. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 27th March. 1813. No. 34.

57. Ibid. " " " No. 35.

58. Ibid. 5th Nov. 1814. No. 59.

59. Ibid. 19th Feb. 1814. No. 57.

60. Bengal Despatches - Revenue - dated 9th May. 1821. para. 100.

61. Vide infra ch. 7. p. 248.

During his first residency, Metcalfe made little advance in the reform of the customs administration. Multifarious and vexatious duties both in transit and town dues continued to be levied on the same basis as in the days of the Marathas. Nominally under the superintendence of the first assistant, the detail of customs administration was in the hands of native officers, a practice which proved so unsatisfactory that Metcalfe asked permission to appoint a European as head officer of the Delhi customs house.⁶² Yet in spite of the chaotic customs system, the sayer duties rose from Rs.2,81,727 in 1811-1812⁶³ to Rs.6,52,550 in 1817-1818⁶⁴, an indication of the growing population of Delhi and the greater circulation of goods. Though conscious of the need to reform the customs, and urged by Government to simplify the transit duties so that they might approximate to the code of the Regulation Provinces,⁶⁵ Metcalfe hesitated to interfere with a system which produced more than one quarter of the total revenue of the Delhi Territory. He preferred the more cautious method of modifying some of the obnoxious duties rather than undertaking the drastic reform which was needed. As a result, little was achieved: and visiting Government officials reported that the Delhi customs system was as oppressive as it was obsolete.⁶⁶ In this branch

62. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 18th Feb. 1812. No. 47

63. Metcalfe's Revenue Report. of 1815.

64. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 19th March. 1819. No. 109.

65. Ibid. 24th Oct. 1817. No. 105.

66. Messrs Rutherford and Bailey in 1819 -
Bengal Revenue Consultations. 13th May. 1819.

of administration, Metcalfe showed a timorousness which contrasts strangely with the boldness which characterised his social measures. The explanation lies in the fact that the complex Delhi customs system did not lend itself to partial reform. It needed to be completely revolutionised: and for that the time was not ripe.

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The first clear account of the working of the judicial system of the Delhi Territory is given in Metcalfe's Judicial Report of 1815; Seton having referred to the subject only in the most general terms.⁶⁷ The courts of judicature, both civil and criminal, were concentrated in the city of Delhi. Justice was only dispensed elsewhere when the assistant went on circuit to hold criminal courts in the districts. There were three civil courts in Delhi: the court of petty suits, presided over by native law officials, handled cases not exceeding Rs.100; in the assistant's court, ordinary suits to any value were judged; while the Resident's court, where he always presided in person, functioned mainly as a court of appeal and gave judgment on all cases referred from the two lower courts. The Resident also dealt with all cases in which the suitors were members of the royal family or independent chiefs.⁶⁸ By far the greatest

67. It has recently been discussed in some detail in P. Spears' "Twilight of the Mughals" pp.92-95; & E. Thompson's "Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe" pp.119-121.

68. Metcalfe's Judicial Report. paras. I-II, & I7.

number of cases were tried in the court for petty suits; but the remarkable fact which emerges from Metcalfe's report on civil justice concerns the unusually large proportion of cases settled by mutual agreement between the contending parties after the case had come before the judge. In the court for petty suits, for instance, one half of the cases were settled in this way; and in the assistant's court, the proportion was one in three. Only in the Resident's court was it rare to find agreement by consent.⁷⁰ It is obvious that the practice of settling disputes by mutual accommodation had Metcalfe's approval. He disliked the whole system of civil judicature as it was established in the existing courts; but he accepted it as a necessary evil. In his judicial report, he had much to say of the perjury of witnesses and the falsification of evidence. In his opinion, the only honest person in the whole judicial establishment was the European judge.⁷¹ The more people, therefore, who could be induced to settle their differences by mutual agreement, the better. Hence the encouragement he gave to the settlement of civil suits by "arbitration," as it came to be called; and his preference for

69. Between May 1811 & July 1815 there were 9,328 petty suits; general suits in the assistant's court numbered 2,182; while the Resident tried 359 cases. Metcalfe's Judicial Report. paras.12-15.

70. 10 cases only out of a total of 359.

71. Metcalfe's Judicial Report paras.185-196.

leaving the village authorities to deal with disputes within
⁷²
 their own borders.

Criminal suits in Delhi were handled mainly by two assistants,
⁷³
 the Resident himself judging the most heinous offences.

One assistant presided over the criminal court of the city of
 Delhi, while the other was always on circuit in the districts.
 During the first four years of Metcalfe's residency, he and his
 assistants had given sentence in 3137 cases; and in July 1815,
 there were 715 prisoners undergoing punishment in the Delhi
⁷⁴
 gaol, mainly for such crimes as cattle-stealing, house-
⁷⁵
 breaking, and petty theft.

To Metcalfe, the most outstanding
 achievement in this field was the almost complete suppression
 of organised robbery which was so wide-spread when he became
 Resident in 1811; and he attributed his success to his revival
 of the system of collective responsibility whereby each village
 was held liable for robberies committed by its inhabitants or
 by those whom they harboured. Seton also had made use of this
 indigenous system of native justice; but it was Metcalfe's
 systematic enforcement of the penalties attached to the crime
 which effectively stamped out the receiving of stolen goods
 and cattle in the villages of the Delhi countryside. Unless

72. cf Spear. op. cit. pp. 93-95.

73. Metcalfe's Judicial Report. paras 19 - 24.

74. Ibid. paras 31 - 34.

75. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 25th Sept. 1823.
 No. 28.

the village to which stolen goods had been traced could produce the offenders, or pass on the responsibility for the theft to another village, they were forced to refund the value of the goods.⁷⁶ The employment of Khojis, or professional tracers, simplified the work of the police; and although Metcalfe admitted that the system gave only "rough justice", it was surprisingly effective; and it had, moreover, the approval of the native population. Thus by 1815, robberies within the city of Delhi had been reduced to the petty thefts of vagabonds; and in the countryside, those who suffered violence or loss knew that there was substantial hope of redress.

Edward Thompson has pointed out that in an era when English criminal justice was notorious for its severe penalties,⁷⁷ punishments in Delhi were unusually mild. This was true in so far that the death penalty had not been invoked since 1806 and corporal punishment was rarely inflicted. Both Seton and Metcalfe refrained from using capital punishment partly on humane grounds, but also because the extreme penalty of the law required the sanction of the King of Delhi. As neither Resident wished to revive the King's prerogative in this respect, the death penalty fell into disuetude. Metcalfe, however, substituted the more ghastly penalty of "solitary, close confinement in chains for life " and frankly admitted that

76. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 25th Sept. 1823. No. 28

77. Thompson "Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe " p 123.

" persons condemned generally petition that they may be hanged
 instead"⁷⁸ He saw nothing incongruous in such a sentence;
 and it was the Court of Directors in England who were critical,
 and asked for detailed information concerning the "effects bodily
 and mental"⁷⁹ on those condemned to such a fate.

Metcalfe's treatment of the hardened criminals in the Delhi
 gaol also aroused criticism in India.⁸⁰ Though he had no
 compunction in doubling the sentences of those who attempted to
 escape from prison; yet at the same time he did much to improve
 conditions within the prison. In 1812, several deaths from
 fever occurred in the Delhi gaol where the drainage was defective;
 and on his own responsibility, Metcalfe re-housed the prisoners
 and authorised the building of a new stone gaol on a healthier
 site.⁸¹ It was characteristic that he acted first and sought
 Government approval later. At all times he was mainly concerned
 to provide a workable solution for problems as they occurred;
 and if the recognised conventional methods did not prove
 successful, he was prepared to experiment with bolder remedies.

That Metcalfe was in no way bound by conventional ideas is
 shown by the treatment he meted out to the hordes of young pick-
 pockets between the ages of eight and twelve who infested the
 Delhi streets and bazaars. No one was safe from their depredations

78. Metcalfe's Judicial Report paras. 163- 179.

79. Bengal Despatches (Judicial) 13th Sept. 1822. paras 185-187.

80. Vide infra. ch. 6 p. 210. Bengal Criminal Consultations.

27th Feb. 1823. No. 5

81. Bengal Criminal Consultations. 16th March 1812. Nos. 24 & 25.

and detection followed by a whipping proved useless as a deterrent.⁸² Metcalfe first came across these young delinquents in the course of his ordinary business in the Delhi courts. "I found that on every court day, some of these little vagabonds were brought up for trial for a repetition of the same crimes. Their faces became quite familiar to me ---- I wished to assign them such punishment as might work a reformation in their morals",⁸³ he wrote when seeking official approval for the "house of industry " he established in Delhi where these young offenders were detained for a sufficiently long period to deter them from their evil practices and enable them to learn a useful craft such as the making of blankets and carpets. Thus was established in Delhi the first Indian reformatory. Metcalfe's practical mind insisted that the period of confinement should "depend in a great degree on the progress of reformation" and on the whole,⁸⁴ the scheme was successful. The gangs of potential young criminals were effectively broken; and many of them left the reformatory as skilled craftsmen able to find work at the factory in Delhi which Metcalfe set up to provide them with sufficient employment.

This piece of constructive humanitarianism was in part a social measure; and in this sphere, Metcalfe's zeal to free

82. Metcalfe's Judicial Report. paras.152 - 162.

83. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 30th Jan. 1813. No. 73.

84. Vide infra ch. 5. pp. 174 - 175.

the people he ruled from oppression of any kind was unbounded.⁸⁵
His abolition of the practice of sati or widow-burning, and
his persistent efforts to remove the burdens imposed by the⁸⁶
custom of impressing "bearers" in the service of Europeans are
evidence of this. Occasionally his zeal outstripped his
discretion and he was obliged to retreat; but usually he was
sufficiently forceful and resolute to carry his point with the
authorities in Calcutta. His measure to abolish the trade in
slaves within the Delhi Territory is an example of this. On⁸⁷
4th September 1812, Metcalfe issued a proclamation which not
only struck at the trade in slaves imported from neighbouring
areas but it prohibited the sale of slaves inside the limits of
his jurisdiction. The practice of slavery was so abhorrent to
Metcalfe that he was taken aback when instructed by the Governor-
General in Council to alter his proclamation so that it
corresponded with Regulation X of 1811.⁸⁸ Metcalfe had erred
unwittingly; but he was not prepared to retract his edict.
A lesser man would have apologised, and obeyed instructions:
Metcalfe apologised, but proceeded to convince the Governor-
General in Council that more harm than good would be done by

85. E.Thompson "Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe " p.172.
86. Metcalfe's Judicial Report. paras 106-136. and
Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 19th Dec.1812 No.67.
87. Bengal Political Consultations. 13th Nov. 1812.No. 13.
88. Ibid. " " " No. 14.
Regulation X of 1811 did no more than prohibit the import
and export of slaves. It did not abolish the buying or
selling of slaves within the Regulation Provinces.

publicly retreating from a position which the people of Delhi
⁸⁹ had accepted. ⁹⁰ The Governor-General acquiesced; and thus,
 with the exception of the palace area, the Delhi Territory
 became one of the first regions in north India where the trade
 in slaves died out. It was this characteristic boldness of
 thought and action which gave the stamp of greatness to Metcalfe's
 administration, and made his "Delhi system" something to which
⁹¹ he always referred with pride.

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That there was little development in the police organisation
 during Metcalfe's residency was mainly due to the fact that in
 the country districts he preferred to rely on the village
 panchayets to deal with their own offenders. He had inherited
 from Seton a system whereby police thanas had been established
 in the chief towns; but instead of extending this net-work
 to the smaller villages, Metcalfe left them to enjoy a large
 measure of exemption from police interference. The most
 turbulent areas were those held by jagirdars; but these estates
 tended to diminish as jagirdars died and their lands reverted to
⁹² Government. In the city of Delhi, a detailed system of
 police duties had long been in operation. Here, and to a

89. Bengal Political Consultations. 26th Feb. 1813. No. 5.

90. Ibid. 12th March. 1813. Nos. 46 & 47.

91. Kaye W. "Selections from the correspondence of Charles,
 Lord Metcalfe" p. 56. Letter from Metcalfe to Bailey.

92. For instance, Hoorul reverted to Government in 1813 (Bengal
 Criminal Judicial Consultations 6th Mar. 1813. No. 39) and Pulwul
 in 1818 (Bengal Revenue Consultations. 27th Mar. 1818. No. 45) and
 these areas then came under the general police organisation
 of the Delhi Territory.

lesser degree in the outlying districts, Metcalfe made use of the caste of sweepers to supply the necessary intelligence for the prevention of disorder.⁹³ The chief police duties were still carried out by the corps of Delhi najibs aided, when necessary, by the men of Skinner's Horse. They policed the city walls, furnished guards for the gaol and the revenue cutcherries, and patrolled the wards into which the city was divided. During Metcalfe's residency, the Governor-General in Council decided that some of these duties should be taken over by burkendazes or native police and that there should be no further recruitment of the Delhi Najibs.⁹⁴ The men of this corps, many of whom were growing old or infirm, had a proud tradition. Since their formation in 1805, they had always been under the Resident's direct control and formed his escort. Metcalfe could not dispute the Governor-General's decision that the Najib corps should gradually die out, but he fiercely resisted an attempt by the officer commanding the military forces stationed at Delhi to bring the Najib corps under his jurisdiction.⁹⁵ The incident led to open conflict between the civil and military authorities in Delhi. Metcalfe felt it imperative that his authority should be vindicated: and he therefore issued orders

93. Metcalfe's Judicial Report paras.62-65; & Spear.op cit pp92-94.

94. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations.30th July.1811.54 & 55

95. Bengal Political Consultations. 5th Dec.1817.No.24.

to Colonel Arnold "to desist from any interference with the Najib Corps." The Resident's action was upheld; and Arnold was informed that any interference whatever on his part was "entirely at variance with the constitution of the corps."⁹⁶

Thus the Resident's authority continued supreme within the Delhi Territory. It was, in fact, almost absolute; the only check being the veto of the Governor-General in Council, and the occasional interference of the Court of Directors in London. An instance of this occurred when Metcalfe came under the direct censure of the Directors for what they considered his extravagant and unauthorised expenditure in equipping his official residence at Delhi. In defending his action, Metcalfe explained that on his arrival at Delhi "there was not a single article of public property at the residency in the way of furniture for the house or equipment for the table." His sense of the dignity and importance of his office led him to assume that he could equip the Delhi residency so that it could compare favourably with the establishments of other Residents at native courts such as those at Hyderabad, Mysore, Poona, and Nagpur. He erred in that he neglected to seek official sanction for his expenditure which the Directors described as "unprecedented in amount." They also demanded that he should repay the sum of Rs.48,119-6-5 and⁹⁷ consider the property he had purchased as his own.

Metcalfe was hurt more by this public reproof than by the pecuniary loss he incurred. He was also angered by what he

96. Bengal Political Consultations. 5th Dec. 1817. No. 30.

97. Kaye "Life and Correspondence." vol. 1. pp. 113-115.

considered the belittling of the office he held. "The plate and other equipments of the Table " he wrote, ⁹⁸ --- must be calculated with a view to the frequent entertainment of sixty to one hundred persons or as many as the house will hold --- At present, though I bow with entire submission to the power I serve, I cannot in my conscience acknowledge the equity of a condemnation passed on me by persons who -- cannot intuitively judge in London what expenses may be necessary at -- the residency at Delhi."

The incident had unfortunate repercussions in that it gave the Court of Directors the impression that Residents at Indian native courts, and the Resident of Delhi in particular, were living in a state of unnecessary magnificence, and that their civil establishments could be run more economically. Accordingly they issued instructions that though the salary of the Resident at Delhi was to remain unchanged, his monthly allowance for "table, attendants, and camp equipage," should be reduced from Rs.5193 to Rs.3,000. Moreover the Resident's covenanted assistants were to be limited to three, and his office establishment was not to exceed a monthly charge of Rs.700 instead of the previous ⁹⁹ Rs.1098.

Although the Governor-General in Council thought these orders

98. Bengal Political Consultations. 30th August.1815. No.59.

99. Bengal Despatches - Political Letter dated 13th Sept.1815
paras 1 - 5.

both arbitrary and impracticable, he considered that the "peremptory and unqualified terms " in which they were couched^{I00} left him no choice but to put them into operation. He did, however, ask Metcalfe to state what the effect of the proposed economies was likely to be; and in his reply, Metcalfe gave a clear and convincing picture of the administrative needs of the Delhi Territory.^{I01} A few months earlier, in his Judicial Report, Metcalfe had declared that if need be he would govern the Delhi Territory " in a tolerable way through the agency of natives"^{I02} without the aid of a single European; but he now gave as his considered opinion that allowing for absences on account of sick leave and deputation work in other areas, the Resident^{I03} needed a minimum staff of six covenanted assistants. Of these, one senior assistant would always be fully employed in dealing with the revenue derived from land and customs, and a second would be needed to superintend the police throughout the Delhi Territory and to act as magistrate in the parganas: a third assistant would be required to take charge of the police of the city of Delhi and its environs and officiate in the civil court; while a fourth would give judgment in the criminal court of Delhi. The two remaining assistants would help the Resident in the political department; one of them, if need arose,

I00. Bengal Letters Received. 30th Nov. 1816.

I01. Bengal Political Consultations. 1st June. 1816. No. 12

I02. Judicial Report para. 88.

I03. Bengal Political Consultations. 1st June 1816. No. 12.

giving help during a temporary vacancy in the revenue and judicial branches of the administration.

Metcalfe pointed out that in many ways the administration of the Delhi Territory was comparable to that of a subordinate government rather than to a political residency; and that the duties performed by his assistants would, in the Regulation Provinces, be executed by collectors, judges, and magistrates. The Governor-General in Council fully appreciated this fact; and in spite of the Directors' peremptory orders to reduce the Delhi establishment to three assistants, he recommended that Metcalfe should retain six assistants with salaries approximating to those of officers performing similar duties in the Regulation Provinces.¹⁰⁴

"We are far from thinking that Mr Metcalfe has proposed too high an establishment " wrote the Governor-General in Council.¹⁰⁵ "Deeply impressed with the necessity of affording the Resident the assistance to the extent stated, we could not hesitate to take on ourselves the responsibility of suspending the execution of the orders of your Hon. Court for reducing

104. Bengal Political Consultations. 26th Oct. 1816. No. 31.A.

The establishment sanctioned was as follows:-

1st Assistant	- Rs. 750	per month	with commission on Customs.
2nd Assistant	- Rs. 750	" "	with deputation allowance
			when on duty in the mofussil.
3rd Assistant	- Rs. 600	"	month.
4th Assistant	- Rs. 500	"	"
5th Assistant	- Rs. 400	"	"
6th Assistant	- Rs. 400	"	"

105. Bengal Letters Received 30th Nov. 1816. para 4. - Political Letter.

the number of assistants to three until the question could again be brought under consideration." The appointment of the six Delhi assistants was accordingly confirmed. It is interesting to note at this juncture that although the Resident retained full control and responsibility for all branches of the Delhi administration the executive business was becoming separated into definite departments - revenue, judicial, political - each in the immediate charge of an assistant. Metcalfe was aware of the tendency and recognised its dangers. He was already considering the possibility of an alternative scheme whereby the Delhi Territory should be divided into two or three divisions, each under an assistant directly responsible to himself, who would execute both revenue and judicial functions.¹⁰⁶ During Metcalfe's first residency, this proposition remained inoperative;¹⁰⁷ but it was to be given form and substance under his successor.

Metcalfe also did some plain speaking about the importance and the diversity of the Resident's duties. His own words best indicate the extent and scope of his activities, for never again did a Resident hold such far-reaching authority. Metcalfe, in his political capacity, was the channel of intercourse between the Governor-General in Council and the numerous courts, princes, and chiefs whose lands adjoined the Delhi Territory. "In his

106. Metcalfe's Judicial Report. paras 95-103.

107. vide infra ch.5. pp.155-7.

judicial capacity" wrote Metcalfe, "the Resident has to administer justice and exercise ministerial authority -- over the city of Delhi, one of the most populous in India, and over a territory 150 miles in length and nearly the same in its utmost breadth -- In his other capacities, he has charge of a Treasury with the annual expenditure of 60 lakhs of rupees. He has to distribute pay to a regiment of cavalry, eight or nine battalions of infantry, and about four thousand irregular horse and foot, as well as to all civil establishments, pensions, and stipendiaries -- He has also a mint, and a correspondence with all departments -- military, civil, and political,"

Metcalfe convinced the Governor-General that such a position must be adequately maintained; and thus Hastings, on his own authority, suspended the order to reduce Metcalfe's Table

Allowance and office establishment. To do otherwise, he stated, would "compromise the dignity of the British Government in the person of its representative, and do injury to the public service." In the light of this statement, the Directors

reconsidered the whole matter; and in 1819 reversed their previous decision and endorsed Hastings' action.

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108. Bengal Political Consultations. 1st June 1816.No.12.

109. Ibid. " " "

Governor-General's Minute of 29th June 1816.

110. Bengal Letters Received. Political Letter of 30th November 1816.paras 8 & 32.

111. Bengal Despatches.- Political Letter of 12th Feb. 1819.

Metcalfe had always placed his political work in the front rank of his many duties; and during his first residency, this aspect of his work was vitally important. In 1814 when the issue of the war with Nepal hung in the balance, and again in 1817 when the combination of Pindari freebooters and hostile Marathas challenged the Company's supremacy in central India, it was Metcalfe's task to keep the chiefs of Hindustan loyal to the Company and to prevent them from adhering to its enemies. During these critical years, all Metcalfe's diplomatic skill and patience were needed to deal successfully with the ambitions, vagaries, and weaknesses, of the chiefs whose lands bordered the Delhi Territory. Geographically these fell into four main groups.¹¹² Immediately to the south, their frontiers closely intersecting the borders of the Delhi Territory, were the states of Alwar (or Macheri) and Bharatpur. To the south-west lay the Rajput states of Jaipur, Bundi, Kotah, Ajmer, Udaipur, Jodhpur, and Jaisalmer - each in a chronic state of weakness and instability. Bordering the western frontier of Delhi and stretching to the verge of the Rajputana desert were the lands held by the Raja of Bikaner, constantly overrun by the warlike tribe of Bhattis: while to the north-west were the territories of the Pathan and Sikh chiefs of which the most important were Jind and Patiala.

112. See Map. pp. 24-25.

To all these surrounding principalities, the Resident at Delhi was the focal point of British authority, through whom all representations to the supreme government must pass. The Resident also had his agents in the independent territories of Lahore and Kabul, and in the lands ruled by Holkar and Sindia, for it was his duty to inform the Governor-General of what was afoot in these states.

Of these neighbouring principalities, the most troublesome were Bharatpur, Alwar, and Jaipur. Although both Bharatpur and Alwar had been in alliance with the British Government since 1806, their rulers were openly hostile. The Raja of Bharatpur, in particular, tried Metcalfe's patience. His harbouring of freebooters and encouragement of their activities made the work of policing the Delhi-Agra frontier, where it adjoined Bharatpur, particularly difficult; and there were frequent boundary disputes. The need to keep constant watch on the Raja's activities caused Metcalfe to replace the native newswriter at Bharatpur by an accredited agent to the Raja's court; with the result that covert insult gave place to open defiance and the Raja refused to admit the Resident's agent. Metcalfe retaliated by dismissing the Bharatpur vakils

113. Bengal Political Consultations. 21st Aug. 1812. No. 15.

114. Ibid. 1st April. 1814. No. 9.

115. Bengal Letters Received. 1st June. 1813. paras. 208 & 209.

116
 from Delhi, and suggested that the Governor-General should
 dissolve the alliance with the Raja. But the time had not yet
 come for an open breach. Bharatpur was still useful as a
 buffer state between the Company's territories and the anarchy
 which in 1813 threatened to engulf central India. 117 Seton
 wrote privately to Metcalfe from Calcutta sympathising with
 him but counselling patience. "How sadly you have been annoyed
 by that weak and ungrateful man, the Rajah of Bharatpur" he
 wrote. 118 He has given us repeated cause of offence; and
 did the state of our army and our finances (now very low) admit
 of our meeting the probable cause of an open rupture, we would
 of course hold very plain language. But as that is now out of
 the question, we must avoid showing our teeth." Metcalfe had
 perforce to bear with the contumacious acts of the Raja who,
 in spite of personal remonstrances from the Governor-General,
 continued unfriendly. 119 Not until 1826 was Bharatpur finally
 brought to book and the fort captured by British arms. 120

Alwar, governed by its half-mad Rao Raja, was frequently at
 odds not only with Bharatpur, its most powerful neighbour, but
 also with states such as Jaipur who invoked British protection.
 As in the case of Bharatpur, the Governor-General was loth to

116. cf. E. Thompson. "Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe" vol. 1. pp. 144-145
 117. Bengal Secret Consultations. 4th June. 1813. No. 29. (145)
 118. Letter quoted by Kaye in "Life & Correspondence" vol. 1. p. 379
 119. Bengal Letters Received. 3rd January. 1817. paras. 256-258.
 120. vide infra ch. 6. p. 234.

dissolve the alliance with Alwar; but when in 1812 the Rao Raja seized the forts of Dubui and Sikrawa from Jaipur, the Governor-General was prepared to enforce restitution at the point of the sword.¹²¹ On this issue Hastings, who had recently arrived in India, was influenced by Metcalfe's views as to the necessary action to be taken.¹²² British troops were already marching on his capital before the Rao Raja retracted and restored the forts he had seized; but his conduct cost him three lakhs of rupees which he was obliged to pay as an indemnity.¹²³ The conduct of the Rao Raja was responsible for the formulation of one of the main doctrines implicit in the conception of the Company as the paramount power in India - namely, that the condition of subordinate alliance in which Alwar had stood to the Company since the treaty of 1803, precluded its ruler from interfering in the affairs of other states without the consent of the protecting power. In 1811, Minto had demanded a written engagement from the Rao Raja that he would not again transgress in this way;¹²⁴ in 1813, Hastings was prepared to use force to make the Rao Raja conform. It was thus becoming an established principle that a state in subordinate alliance with the British Government could no longer indulge in an independent foreign policy.

- 121. Bengal Political Consultations. 25th June. 1813. No. 27.
- 122. Kaye "Life & Correspondence" vol. I. p. 328.
- 123. Bengal Political Consultations. 10th Dec. 1813. No. 22. and E. Thompson, "Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe" pp. 148-149.
- 124. Bengal Political Consultations. 3rd May. 1811. No. 46.

That the British Government should interfere to protect from spoliation a state such as Jaipur with whom it had no treaty of alliance was evidence of the change of policy which circumstances were forcing upon the Company. Jaipur was an outstanding example of the weakness and disintegration of the Rajput states of central India. Torn by internal strife, with no ruler strong enough to dominate contending factions, it was defenceless before the onslaughts of the Pindaris and the more systematic invasions of Amir Khan. Its ruler had applied to Seton for aid; and his repeated appeals for help in 1811 had caused Metcalfe to plead for a reconsideration of the policy of non-interference which had been in force since 1806. "People do not scruple to assert " he wrote to the Governor-General in Council soon after he became Resident, ¹²⁵ " that they have a right to the protection of the British Government. They say that there has always existed some protecting power in India to which peaceable states submitted and in return obtained its protection --- that the British Government now occupies the place of the great protecting power ---- It is impossible to live in this part of India," he continued, " and see the scenes which pass before our eyes, without regretting that the Rajput states are not under our protection." But his complaint fell on deaf ears; ¹²⁶

125. Bengal Secret Consultations. 12th July. 1811. No. 1

126. Ibid. " " " No. 2

and it was not until the advent of Hastings and his meeting with Metcalfe in 1815 that the policy which the Resident advocated received favourable consideration.

When discussing the condition of central India and Hindustan at his meeting with the Governor-General, Metcalfe urged the suppression of the Pindaris as a measure of first importance.¹²⁷ These hordes of armed free-booters had originally been attached to the Maratha armies; and after the conclusion of the treaties of 1805 and 1806, their erstwhile masters had turned them loose on the defenceless Rajput states to plunder and pillage at will. Nor were their depredations confined to Rajputana. Between 1812 and 1816, under such leaders as Chitu, Wazil Muhammad, and Kazim Khan, they made rapid raids across India, leaving in their path appalling devastation.¹²⁸ In April 1816, Lord Hastings reckoned that no less than 23,000 horsemen were raiding the Nizam's dominions and the Northern Circars, and that " they carried off booty to the value of more than a million sterling."¹²⁹ Long before the Pindaris attacked British territory, Metcalfe was urging that action should be taken against similar bands of marauders on the Agra frontier;¹³⁰ and in 1812, the Governor-General in Council was moved to protest to Holkar's government

127. Kaye. "Life and Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe" vol. 1. p. 316.

128. Cambridge History of India, vol. 5. p. 377.

129. Bute - "Private Journal of the Marquis of Hastings." p. 272

130. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 16th May. 1812. No. 47 and 29th May. 1812. No. 24.

131

against the release of Karim Khan whom they held prisoner. No less a menace were the organised raids of the Pathan leader Amir Khan. In origin a dependant of Holkar, by 1816 he had taken advantage of the distracted policies following on the death of Jaswant Rao Holkar to seize the chief power in the state. He had also invaded the neighbouring state of Jaipur with his armed levies, enforcing from the luckless ruler a tribute of 16 lakhs of rupees.¹³² In his extremity, the Jaipur Raja renewed his appeal for British protection; and this time, he¹³³ did not appeal in vain.

This was the situation at the beginning of 1816. The close of the war with Nepal had freed Hastings to deal with both Amir Khan and the Pindaris; and but for the definite veto of the Board of Control and the Directors, he would have taken the field against them in the spring of that year. The Governor-General did not feel, however, that in a matter of crucial importance such as this, he could disregard direct orders from the home authorities as well as opposition from members of his own council who feared that measures against the Pindaris and Amir Khan might develop into a general Maratha War.¹³⁴ It was not until further raids in the direction of Cuttack threatened the Company's territory that the Directors became reconciled to

131. Bengal Political Consultations. 10th July. 1812. No. 16.

132. Thompson. "Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe". p. 146.

133. Bengal Secret Consultations. 20th April. 1816. No. 6

134. Bute. "Private Journal of the Marquis of Hastings" p. 251 & 252.

the use of military force on a large scale to reduce the Pindaris. Permission to begin operations reached Lord Hastings at the end of 1816; but the Governor-General found it impracticable to take the field till the close of the rainy season in 1817.¹³⁵

In the intervening months, Lord Hastings took steps to achieve his aim of bringing permanent peace and security to the ravaged lands of central India; and he called upon Metcalfe to conduct the main diplomatic measures entailed. Pressure was to be exerted on Sindia so that he should cease abetting the Pindaris and assist in their suppression: Amir Khan was to be tempted to abandon his evil ways and detach himself from the Pindaris by the offer of an independent principality carved from the lands he had occupied for many years under the Holkar government. Jaipur, once Amir Khan's levies were withdrawn, was to enter into subordinate alliance with the Company as the price of its freedom: while the divided and distracted Holkar state, though shorn of much of its hereditary possessions, would be guaranteed British protection. Once these ends were achieved and the Pindaris exterminated, Hastings hoped that tranquility would be preserved by concluding treaties of subordinate alliance with the Rajput and other dependent states in need of British protection.

135. Bengal Letters Received - Secret Letter of 1st March. 1820
paras. 2--32.

A reluctant consent to proceed with this policy having been received from the authorities in England, the main obstacle to the Governor-General's plans lay in those clauses of the Treaty of Serji Argengaum which had hitherto precluded the British from forming alliances with other Indian states. This Hastings formally abrogated; and two weeks before he took the field against the Pindaris, he addressed a letter to Sindia in which he claimed the right to enter " into engagements with any states whose position may afford me security against the re-establishment of the Pindaris. " ¹³⁶ The Rajput states were, particularly specified; and the way was now open for Metcalfe to begin negotiations. His first step was to invite the vakils of the Rajput states to Delhi to discuss with him the terms of the treaties of subordinate alliance. The Governor-General's instructions were clearly set forth in a despatch dated ¹³⁷ 8th October 1817. " It is desirable to conclude arrangements with the states in question on conditions which should give to the British Government entire control over their political relations " he wrote. " The states with which it is expedient for the British Government to form connection . . . are Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Kotah, Bundi, Kerowli, and Banswara." " The completion of all details " added the Governor-General

136. Letter of Hastings to Metcalfe dated 5th Oct. 1817.
Quoted in Kaye's " Life & Correspondence of Charles,
Lord Metcalfe. " vol.1. p.330

137. Bengal Secret Consultations. 28th Oct. 1817. No. 26.

in Council "is not so material as the accomplishment of the general objects of securing their co-operation against the free-booters and their agreement to place their forces - -at our disposal, contributing each according to its means to the charge which the British Government would incur in their protection."

It was upon this basis that Metcalfe concluded treaties with
138
the Rajput states.

Most difficult and most prolonged were the negotiations with Jaipur, the Raja's desire for protection fluctuating with the
139
proximity of Amir Khan and his troops. The ruler of Jaipur had been one of the first to ask for British protection; and the terms of the treaty finally agreed to by Jaipur were closely followed in treaties with the other Rajput states. The Raja was guaranteed British protection against all his enemies both internal and external; and in return, he was to provide an annual "tribute" of 15 lakhs of rupees towards the support of a subsidiary force for his protection. The protecting or

138. States with whom Metcalfe concluded treaties of subordinate alliance were:-

Kerowli	(15th Nov. 1817)	Beng. Secret Cons.	5th Dec. 1817.	No. 36.
Jodhpur	(16th Jan. 1818)	" "	16th Jan. 1818.	No. 6.
Udaipur	(13th Feb. 1818)	" "	13th Feb. 1818.	No. 14.
Bikaner	(3rd Apr. 1818)	" "	3rd Apr. 1818.	No. 36.
Kishengur	(24th Apr. 1818)	" "	24th Apr. 1818.	No. 6.
Jaipur	(1st May. 1818)	" "	1st May. 1818.	No. 18.
Banswara	(10th Oct. 1818)	" "	10th Oct. 1818.	No. 6.
Jaisalmer	(2nd Jan. 1819)	" "	2nd Jan. 1819.	No. 48.

Treaties with Bundi and Kotah were concluded by Captain Tod on behalf of Metcalfe - Bengal Letters Received. (Secret Letter of 1st March 1820. para 55.)

139. Bute "Private Journal of the Marquis of Hastings." pp. 258
-259.

paramount power assumed complete control of the external relations of the state, but refrained from interference with its domestic concerns unless extreme urgency demanded that it should intervene. ¹⁴⁰ With the more distant states of Bikaner and Jaisalmer, treaties were concluded in more general terms; the British Government promising to help the rulers of these states against their enemies in return for their co-operation ¹⁴¹ against the Pindaris.

With Amir Khan, Metcalfe was instructed to conclude a treaty for which the only excuse lay in the urgency of the situation. The past acts of this chief of free-booters were to be condoned on condition that he disbanded his army, forswore his predatory habits, and settled down to law-abiding ways in the principality of Tonk which was assigned to him ¹⁴² from the lands he held from the Holkar state. Metcalfe's diplomacy was successful; and the treaty with Amir Khan was formally ratified by the Governor-General in Council on ¹⁴³ 15th November 1817, Lord Hastings expressing his " high approbation " of Metcalfe's " judgment, ability, and address -- and the able and accurate view " he had taken of the several ¹⁴⁴ important questions affected by the settlement with Amir Khan.

140. Bengal Secret Consultations. 20th April. 1816. No. 26.

In the case of Jaipur, the tribute for the first five years after the conclusion of the Treaty was substantially reduced until the finances of the state recovered.

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|------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 141. | Bengal Secret Consultations. | 28th October. 1817. No. 26. |
| 142. | Ibid. | 28th October. 1817. No. 13. |
| 143. | Ibid. | 5th December. 1817. No. 26. |
| 144. | Ibid. | 19th December. 1817. No. 5. |

Among these matters was the future relationship between the British Government and the Holkar state, for the defalcation of Amir Khan was in part responsible for the final overthrow of the Holkar government. The murder of the Regent Tulusi Bai and the alliance of the usurper with the Peshwa against the British had its conclusion in the disastrous defeat of Mahidpur and the destruction of the Holkar forces. In the treaty which followed, Metcalfe delegated the negotiations to Captain Tod. Holkar was obliged to sever his connection with the Peshwa and other foreign states; abandon his claims on the Rajput chiefs; confirm the grant of Tonk and Rampura to Amir Khan; and maintain a body of horse for the service of the British Government. In return, Holkar's remaining possessions were guaranteed and¹⁴⁵ were taken under British protection. As had been foreseen, the struggle against the Pindaris showed the Maratha princes in their true light. Faced with the decision to aid in the suppression of the Pindaris or be numbered among them, all the Maratha princes - Sindia, Holkar, Appa Sahib, and the Peshwa - took the opportunity to combine against the British. But by May 1818, military measures against both Pindaris and Marathas had been brought to a successful conclusion. The Pindaris were dispersed and finally exterminated after the defeat of Chitu¹⁴⁶ near Hindia in 1818; and in the ensuing treaties concluded

145. Bengal Letters Received - Secret Letter dated 1st March 1820 paras 75--79

146. Thompson. E. "Indian Princes." p. 252.

with the defeated Maratha princes, the Company was definitely accepted as the paramount power in India.

In the wider field of Indian politics, the architect of this policy was Hastings, as the Directors¹⁴⁷ recognised when they sent their congratulations and thanks: yet in the Governor-General's achievement, Metcalfe had played an important part. Much of the original inspiration behind the policy so momentously fulfilled was his; and his treaties with the Rajput states and with Amir Khan were vital to the success of the Governor-General's military measures in the Deccan. Thus at the close of hostilities in 1818, the prestige of the Resident of Delhi was at its height; and until some further arrangement could be made, Metcalfe was vested with the political direction of those subordinate states on his south-west frontier whose alliance with the British power he had so assiduously fostered.

Occupied though he was with the progress of the Rajput states, Metcalfe kept careful watch on his turbulent western and north-west borders. Having seen warfare waged on a large scale against the Pindari plunderers, he was not prepared to condone the raids of the Bhattis into Hariana. Expelled from Fatehabad in 1810 when the district was annexed to the Delhi Territory,¹⁴⁸ these bands of armed horsemen continued to

147. Home Miscellaneous Series vol.455. Resolution passed at a court held on 20th January.1819.

148. vide supra chapter.3. p. 73

flourish in the lands between Sirsa and the Bahawalpur desert. With the connivance of Zabita Khan, who owed nominal allegiance to the British government, they constantly harried the Bikaner and Hansi territories. Their raids culminated in the seizure of Fatchabad; with the result that a military force under Brigadier General Arnold was sent to subdue them. On Metcalfe's advice, the Governor-General decided to take over the whole area inhabited by the Bhattis, as no other arrangement would " effectively tend to the lasting tranquility of the frontier." 150 Accordingly, Zabita Khan was deposed; and out of his confiscated estates, the new district of Sirsa was formally 151 annexed to the Delhi Territory at the end of 1818.

The Bhatti insurrection drew Metcalfe's attention to the plight of the Raja of Bikaner, whose thakars were in rebellion and whose lands were constantly overrun by the Bhatti tribesmen. Metcalfe considered that the recent treaty with Bikaner 152 bound the British to send aid to the Raja, and Brigadier Arnold's force was therefore directed to drive the Bhattis from Bikaner and reduce the rebellious nobles to submission. Once this was accomplished, the British retained possession of the fortress of Behadra, whose chief had previously appealed

149. Compton. "Rajahs of the Punjab." p.180.

150. Bengal Political Consultations. 20th Sept.1818.No.51.

151. Gazetteer of the Hissar District. p.15.

152. Bengal Political Consultations. 1st May.1818.No.63.

for British protection against attacks from Patiala - his own
 153
 overlord, the Raja of Bikaner, being powerless to help him.
 The chronic disorder in Bikaner drew attention to one of the
 weaknesses inherent in the treaties of alliance made with the
 states bordering Delhi. The Court of Directors, always averse
 to the acquisition of new territory, especially in a district
 such as Sirsa which for many years was not likely to produce
 sufficient revenue to equal the cost of its administration,
 referred to Brigadier Arnold's report that "if all the re-
 fractory and discontented thakars in the Raja's territory
 were to be turned out of their strongholds, he would have
 few subjects remaining, and the detachment would have to
 subjugate the whole country." The Directors agreed that by
 Articles 6 & 7 of the Treaty with Bikaner we were bound to
 aid the Raja, but they added the shrewd comment that by
 doing so "we pledge ourselves to support authority how much
 so ever abused -- thereby, perhaps, perpetuating the mischief
 and incurring all the obloquy of misrule."¹⁵⁴ For the time
 being, however, the Raja's authority was restored; though
 the occupation of Behadra and the border villages remained a
 155
 subject of dispute between Delhi and Bikaner for many years.

The northern frontier of Delhi, apart from the Nepalese
 war, was comparatively quiet. Ranjit Singh adhered faith-

153. Bengal Political Consultations. 17th December. 1816. No. 17.

154. Bengal Despatches-Political Letter dated 23rd May. 1821.

155. vide infra chapter. 5. p. 181.

fully to the Treaty of Amritsar and attempted no interference beyond the ~~Sat~~lej. During the greater part of Metcalfe's residency, the Protected Sikh States were under the immediate supervision of Ochterlony at Ludhiana, and only on questions of major importance did Metcalfe intervene. The chief difficulty lay in the warlike character of the chiefs and their internecine feuds which assumed such proportions that soon after Metcalfe came to Delhi in 1811, he was obliged to issue a proclamation warning the chiefs of the severe penalties they would incur unless they desisted from private warfare.¹⁵⁶ The presence of the Company's troops at Ludhiana was a sufficient reminder that lawlessness would not go unpunished and, apart from Ochterlony's intervention to preserve order in Patiala¹⁵⁷ and Jind,¹⁵⁸ no major incident occurred.

The revolution in Kabul and the flight of Shah Shuja to Ludhiana on 7th September 1815 did not affect the tranquillity of the Delhi Territory. The threat of a French invasion across the north-west frontier of India no longer existed, and the Russian menace had not yet appeared. As the Company had no desire to intervene in the internal affairs of Kabul, they maintained a strict neutrality; offering the exiled king

156. Bengal Political Consultations. 5th July. 1811. No. 48

157. Ochterlony established the Rani Aus Khan as Regent in 1812, a year prior to the death of the imbecile Raja Sabib Singh. Compton. op.cit. p.153.

158. At the time of the murder of the Rani and her minister in 1814.

(Bengal Political Consultations. 4th October. 1814. Nos. 13 & 14.

asylum at Ludhiana under the supervision of Ochterlony, and an annual stipend of Rs.50,000 so long as he remained in British territory.¹⁵⁹

Thus by the end of 1818, the frontiers of Delhi were stabilised and quiet. With the exception of the newly-annexed district of Sirsa on the west and Ajmer,¹⁶⁰ which had been ceded by Sindia to the Company in 1818, there had been no great extension of territory during Metcalfe's residency. Yet it was obvious to the authorities at Calcutta that the additional political work occasioned by the superintendence of the Rajput states made some reorganisation of the Resident's work essential. The Governor-General in Council therefore decided to create a new residency for the management of relations with the subordinate states of Rajputana whose affairs were, for the time being, separated from Delhi. The post of Resident in Rajputana and Commissioner General with the Rajput States was offered to Ochterlony who, at the time of his appointment, handed over to the Resident at Delhi the direct superintendence of the Sikh and the Hill States.¹⁶¹

159. Bengal Letters Received. - Political Letter of 3rd Jan. 1817. paras.267 - 279.

160. Ajmer was not incorporated in the Delhi Territory though the Resident was responsible for its political direction. Wilder, one of Metcalfe's assistants, was deputed to settle and administer Ajmer under the superintendence of the Resident. Bengal Letters Received, Secret Letter of 1st March.1820. para.93.

161. Bengal Political Consultations. 24th April.1818.No.16.

The Hill states on the Nepal frontier had been taken under British protection and supervision at the close of the Gurkha War in 1816.

This was an interim arrangement; for Metcalfe left Delhi within a few months of its completion to take up the office of Secretary to the Government in the Secret and Political Department at Calcutta.¹⁶² Ochterlony was then offered the Residency at Delhi, retaining only the political direction of the eastern Rajput states, the rest of Rajputana being transferred to the charge of Captain Tod.¹⁶³

Within the Delhi Territory, however, a reorganisation far more extensive was afoot. On Metcalfe's departure, the Governor-General in Council decided that the time had come to separate the revenue and judicial branches of the administration from the Resident's political work. Thus when Metcalfe handed over the Delhi residency to Ochterlony on 19th December 1818,¹⁶⁴ the appointment of "a civil officer with high powers, judicial and revenue, distinct from political authority"¹⁶⁵ had already been decided. For the Delhi Territory, it was the end of an era. During the seven crowded years of his residency, Metcalfe had seen a backward territory progress to the stage when many experienced administrators thought that the time had come to introduce the Company's Regulations there; its revenue had doubled; and its internal peace had been disturbed by no major outbreak, when violence to north and south was general. The

162. Bengal Letters Received. Secret Letter 1st March. 1820.

§§ (116-119)

163. Ibid. Political " 14th Jan. 1819. para. 37

164. Bengal Political Consultations. 9th Jan. 1819. No. 24

165. Letter from Adam to Metcalfe dated 16th Nov. 1818.

Quoted in Kaye's "Life & Correspondence. p. 335.

King of Delhi had offered no serious opposition to the Governor-General in Council since the early days of Metcalfe's residency and appeared to have acquiesced in the status bestowed on him by the Company. Thus Metcalfe left Delhi, feeling that his work there was "generally approved, and that its success was indubitable." Looking back five years later he wrote of his administration, "When I quitted Delhi, I was under the impression that it was suited to the character of the people, had their general concurrence, and promoted their happiness -- If I am entitled to any credit for public services, it must rest chiefly on the successful management of the Delhi Territory, during the seven or eight years of my residency, the most important and efficient period of my life." ¹⁶⁶ This was Metcalfe's considered estimate of his administration at Delhi between 1811 and 1818; and at the time of his departure, there were few in India who did not fully endorse it.

166. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 25th September 1823. No. 28

Even if the pending issue of Metcalfe had not been withdrawn, recognition on a large scale would have taken place. As it was, the main constitutional change which occurred with the appointment of Gentles to the Delhi Residency on 14th November 1818 was the almost complete separation of the political and

1. Bengal Political Consultations, 14th November 1818. No. 2.

Chapter 5

Divided Responsibility at Delhi. 1819 - 1821.

The years 1819 to 1821 marked the beginning of a period of peculiar complexity and difficulty in the administration of the Delhi Territory. In the political sphere, the extension of the Resident's work consequent upon the treaties of subordinate alliance with the Rajput states made some division of labour essential; and the Governor-General in Council used the occasion of Sir Charles Metcalfe's promotion to Calcutta to bring into operation changes which he had long thought necessary. With regard to the internal administration of the Delhi Territory, the time had long been ripe for a more direct approximation to the revenue and judicial system by which the provinces east of the Jumna were governed; and in the years following Metcalfe's departure to the Presidency, steps were taken to bring the hardy and distinctive structure of "the Delhi system" into conformity with government as it existed in the Regulation Provinces.

Even if the guiding hand of Metcalfe had not been withdrawn, reorganisation on a large scale would have taken place. As it was, the main constitutional change which occurred with the appointment of Ochterlony to the Delhi Residency on 14th November 1818¹ was the almost complete separation of the political and

1. Bengal Political Consultations. 14th November 1818.No.2.

civil functions of the Resident, and the appointment of a Civil Commissioner in the person of Thomas Fortescue.² Ochterlony rejoiced to be back at Delhi,³ even though he was to find his office shorn of much of its former significance. To this distinguished soldier in his sixtieth year, it seemed as though he were being publicly re-instated to a position from which he had been removed twelve years earlier.⁴ Two years of constant administrative friction were to elapse before Ochterlony realised that the grant of judicial and revenue control to the Civil Commissioner had to a large extent undermined the authority of the Resident.

This was by no means the intention of Government when it initiated the administrative changes at the end of 1818. Indeed, special care was taken to safeguard the Resident's pre-eminence. In addition to the usual political activities of the Resident, Ochterlony retained his command of the third division of the Field Army, and continued to direct the affairs of the eastern Rajput states of Jaipur, Kishenghur, and Kerouli, as well as all matters connected with ⁵ Amir Khan. Ajmer, though directly

2. Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations. 26th March 1819, No. 7.

3. Vide Ochterlony's letter to Metcalfe on hearing of his appointment, quoted in Thompson's "Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe"

4. Vide Supra. chapter 2. p. 42 (p. 173.

5. Bengal Political Consultations. 6th Feb. 1819. No. 3 (The Western Rajput states of Jodhpur, Udaipur, Kotah, & Bundi, were placed under the direction of Captain Tod who was given the title of Political Agent with the Western Rajput States. The office of Resident in Rajputana, which Ochterlony had held for a short time, was abolished.)

administered by Wilder, also came under Ochterlony's superintendence. The gates of the city of Delhi together with the mint and the treasury remained in the Resident's exclusive charge; while in the judicial sphere, the Resident's sanction was required before any capital sentence could be carried out. The Resident was vested with the sole charge of all judicial matters affecting the royal family and independent chiefs residing in the Delhi Territory; and it was laid down that "in any difference of opinion occurring between the Resident and the Civil Commissioner, the authority of the Resident was to be paramount--- until the result of a reference to Government should be known."

Fortescue, the first Civil Commissioner of the Delhi Territory, was an able and experienced administrator. "I have been actively and variously employed in the Ceded and Conquered Provinces and in different quarters of our Old Territories," he wrote; but although his previous experience had been entirely in districts administered according to the Regulations, he came to Delhi with an open mind, and found much to admire in the system he found working there. By the terms of his appointment, he was vested with authority over all revenue and judicial

6. Bengal Letters Received. 20th March. 1820. paras. 33 & 36.

7. Ibid. " " " para. 32.

8. Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations. 29th Dec. 1820. No. 7.
(Fortescue had served as Acting Collector at Dacca, Murshidabad, Midnapur, Aligarh, and Etawah; Judge and Magistrate at Patna, and Allahabad; and Agent to the Governor-General at Murshidabad.
Princep. H.T; A General Register of the East India Company's Civil Servants.)

9. Bengal Political Consultations. 16th October. 1819. No. 47.

matters previously exercised by the Resident, including complete responsibility for the supervision and guidance of his Assistants. To emphasise the nature and the extent of his jurisdiction, Fortescue was informed "that the general duties of the Commissioner be in regard to land revenue and customs, those of a Board of Revenue or a Board of Commissioners; in police, those of a Superintendent of Police; in civil judicature, those of a Court of Appeal; in criminal judicature, those of a Court of Circuit; with such variations in all branches as local circumstances may render expedient."¹⁰ In short, he was to be responsible for the entire internal administration of the Delhi Territory.

Accompanying this division of power between the Resident and the Civil Commissioner was the separation of the Delhi Territory for administrative purposes into three divisions, each one in the charge of a Principal Assistant directly responsible to the Commissioner. Metcalfe had long ago come to the conclusion that the revenue and judicial business of the Delhi Territory had reached such dimensions that some territorial division was¹¹ essential. The arrangement also permitted each Principal Assistant to exercise both revenue and judicial functions within his own division. Of the three divisions inaugurated in 1819

10. Bengal Political Consultations. 6th Feb. 1819. No. 28.
Governor-General's Resolution.

11. Vide supra. chapter. 4. p. 131.

the most important though the smallest was the centre division containing the city of Delhi and its environs; and to this was appointed William Fraser, the most experienced though the most erratic of Metcalfe's assistants. Charge of the turbulent northern division was given to Thomas Metcalfe, brother of the late Resident; and Richard Cavendish became Principal Assistant of the southern division. All three were capable men who, under Sir Charles Metcalfe, had gained wide experience of the revenue and judicial branches of the Delhi administration. Subject to the overruling power of the Commissioner, who could regulate their duties and take into his own hands any matter he thought necessary, the Principal Assistants had full responsibility for the collection of revenue and customs, the administration of justice, and the control of the police. In each division, the Principal Assistant was to have a revenue office and a court suitable for the business of his area; and he was to send to the Commissioner at Delhi all revenue collections and accounts, and transfer to the Commissioner's court all major judicial cases. The Resolution which promulgated these changes at Delhi ¹² contained two significant clauses each of which was indicative of the Governor-General's line of thought. The first abolished the term "Assigned Territory," which had been in use since the settlement of 1805; and the Delhi Territory was henceforth to be in name what it had "long been in fact, a part of the British Dominion."

The second definitely proclaimed that "the general spirit of the Regulations be followed in the administration of the Delhi Territory as far as may be without cramping the efficient activity necessary in a possession so peculiarly circumstanced."

Such was the new constitution laid down for the Delhi Territory in 1819; and Fortescue and his assistants prepared to give it a fair trial. Within a few months, however, it became apparent that the original partition of the Delhi Territory into a northern, centre, and southern division satisfied neither the Commissioner nor his assistants. William Fraser raised the question of a revision of the three districts early in 1819,¹³ suggesting that he be transferred from the centre division to the western part of the territory; and that the commission on the customs, hitherto reserved for the First Assistant in charge of the Delhi revenue, be divided equally among the Principal Assistants. Fortescue, who agreed that some revision of the original plan was desirable,¹⁴ put forward an alternative scheme; with the result that in June 1819 the Governor-General in Council decided that a fourth division of the Delhi Territory should be created by subdividing the unwieldy northern division into a western and a northern section. He refused, however, the suggestion made by both Fortescue and Fraser that the centre division should be incorporated with any of the other areas; though he endorsed the

13. Bengal Political Consultations. 12th June. 1819. No.28.

14. Ibid. " " " No.27.

proposal that the commission on the customs should be divided equally among the Principal Assistants.

Metcalf, who, as Political Secretary, communicated the new arrangement to Fortescue, had had many years experience in dealing with William Fraser. While recognising his extensive knowledge and great ability, he was well aware that Fraser would not easily fit into the more stereotyped system being put into operation at Delhi. Fraser's request that he should be removed from the charge of the centre division to the wilder and less-settled regions of the west was, for the time being, disallowed, though a few months later, Fraser achieved his object of evading¹⁵ the controlling vigilance of the Commissioner at Delhi. The rebuke he received was one of many administered by Government over the years; and indicated that those in authority were aware of the disabilities as well as the merits of their servants. "Mr Fraser will continue to exercise the functions to which he was¹⁶ nominated in the City division," wrote Metcalfe. "The Governor-General in Council cannot admit the pretensions of a servant of Government to select his own duties or to intimate dissatisfaction with those assigned to him -- The Governor-General sees no reason to change his opinion that the duties of the Assistant in charge of the City Division are of a most eminent and delicate nature; especially when, during the occasional absence of the Commissioner

15. Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations. 25th Jan. 1820. No. 2.

16. Bengal Political Consultations. 12th June. 1819. No. 29.

he must become the chief civil authority at that important and distinguished station." And so, for the time being, Fraser remained at Delhi.

Once the four divisions of the Delhi Territory were re-constituted, Fortescue's chief task was to survey and report on the working of the main branches of the administration. The reports he compiled on the revenue, customs, and judicial systems¹⁷ give a detailed picture of the administration as he found it functioning at Delhi in 1819 and 1820; and his recommendations showed the weakness as well as the strength of Metcalfe's "Delhi System." A few years later, when criticism of much that Metcalfe had achieved at Delhi became acute,¹⁸ it was to Fortescue's reports that both the Governor-General and the Directors turned when desirous of refuting charges that they felt were unreasonable and exaggerated.

The Revenue Report which Fortescue presented on 28th April 1820 was one of the finest of its kind. Determined to get first-hand evidence before pronouncing judgment, he toured the Delhi Territory pargana by pargana. "I have had two main objects in view," he wrote,¹⁹ "local facts and native opinions--I have likewise ascertained the feelings and impressions of our public

17. The Reports submitted by Fortescue are referred to in this thesis as:-
 Fortescue's Revenue Report. (Ben. Rev. Cons. 13th Nov. 1820. No. 26.)
 Fortescue's Customs Report. (" " " 13th Nov. 1820. Nos. 27-29)
 Fortescue's Judicial Report. (Ben. Civ. Jud. Cons. 12th May. 1820. No. 3)
18. vide infra chapter 6. p. 220.
19. Revenue Report. para. 5.

officers." In connection with the villages where settlements had been concluded, Fortescue was asked to find out and record the exact amount of the jama or demand, the period of years for which the settlement had been made, the method by which it had been concluded - whether by agreement with the individual proprietor, or with the village as a whole through the agency of the muqaddams. With regard to unsettled land, the Commissioner was requested to find out how much was farmed out to individuals; and the amount of rent levied on the crops of unsettled land held on "Khas" tenure. Government was also desirous of obtaining precise information concerning the various classes of proprietors and cultivators inhabiting the Delhi villages and their prescriptive rights and privileges; and concluded by asking Fortescue to indicate his own opinion "of the benefits
20
and disadvantages" attending the whole system.

Such were the Commissioner's terms of reference; and the result of his labours was a complete and detailed survey of the land, customs, and institutions of the village communities of the Delhi Territory. In a recent chapter entitled "Rural Life
21
of the Delhi Territory", Dr Spear has used the material of Fortescue's Report to describe the varying functions of the inhabitants of the Delhi villages. The muqaddams, the

20. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 2nd April. 1819. No. 54.

21. Spear, P. "Twilight of the Mughals." chapter 6.

different classes of proprietors and cultivators, the artisans, the priest, the water-carrier - all are there depicted, as are the traditional methods of apportioning the Government demand among the villagers. The picture is vividly portrayed and needs no amplification. It is noteworthy, however, that after an exhaustive survey such as this, Fortescue was whole-heartedly in favour of preserving the system. "When on tour in the interior of this territory," he wrote, "I frequently talked to the proprietors as to the effect of making a separate settlement with each of the proprietors for his own share. Some few-- appeared to favour the suggestion, but by far the greater majority rejected it as pernicious --- They were convinced that all fraternity and ties in the village would be dissolved." It was this concensus of native opinion which caused him to recommend that the village societies should be left to make their own adjustment of the public demand upon themselves; and that the muqaddams and zilladars should continue to act as channels of communication between the Government revenue officers and the villagers. Thus Fortescue, who for many years had administered the revenue regulations in the older provinces, had no hesitation in declaring "how very inapplicable" such enactments would be in the Delhi Territory; and he expressed a hope that the village

22. Revenue Report. para 226.

23. A muqaddam chosen to act for several villages - Revenue Report. para 225.

24. Revenue Report. para.229.

communities would be allowed to remain undisturbed.

With regard to the total revenue of the Delhi Territory, the Commissioner quoted some interesting figures.²⁵ The revenue receipts for 1818 - 1819, exclusive of charges, amounted to Rs.34,35,048-1-7, the highest figure yet attained. It included Rs.3,12,279-9-2 from the Noh Salt receipts which were usually credited in the Agra District; and the collections from sayer and abkari which amounted to Rs.7,43,403-8-12. The total land revenue was Rs.23,79,364-15-5; and of this, Rs.19, 26, 903-12-8 came from the settled villages. Fortescue had left Delhi before the returns for the following year were made. Had he still held office, he would have welcomed the fact that in 1819 - 1820 the total net receipts showed an increase over the previous year of Rs.2,75,784-3-8.²⁶

Criticism of the Delhi Customs system was so widespread that Fortescue was asked to report in detail on the sayer and town²⁷ duties of the Delhi Territory. The matter was precipitated by a formal protest made to the Secretary of the Board of Trade at Calcutta by two Government officials, Messrs Rutherford and Bailey, after a visit to Delhi in February 1819.²⁸ They presented an indictment of the whole customs system of the Delhi Territory which they stated was "a general source of dissatisfaction and complaint" and which they declared to be in need of immediate

25. Revenue Report. para 10.

26. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 11th May. 1821. No. 37.

27. Ibid. 2nd April. 1819. No. 54.

28. Ibid. 13th May. 1819. No. 65.

reform. Their criticisms were, in the main, directed against the antiquated method of collecting the customs, unchanged since the days of the Marathas; and against the varying and complicated duties imposed on no less than 716 articles of trade or consumption. They complained that this system had the two-fold effect of greatly enhancing the price of goods and of diverting trade from its natural route through the Delhi Territory to avoid prohibitive duties. "Why this system of taxation, so different from that in force in the other provinces -----should be continued at Delhi, we are unable to say," they concluded.

Metcalfe replied from Calcutta in the form of a Resolution
dated April 1819.²⁹ Angry that public criticism should be focussed on any aspect of his Delhi administration, he characterised the charges as "ill-considered, prejudiced, and uncandid. They must leave an impression that I was above seven years Resident at Delhi, blind to the evils of a most mischievous system" he stated. Metcalfe had, in fact, made several minor and tentative reforms of the customs dues in 1817-1818, such as revising the list of articles on which duties were levied, and the rates at which duty was payable; but he was far from being convinced that the revolutionary changes advocated by Rutherford and Bailey were of sufficient

importance to warrant the sacrifice of revenue entailed. "I cannot pretend to see what would be the ultimate effect of such a change," he wrote, "neither do I feel myself competent to offer a decided opinion as to whether it is expedient to abolish or to regulate the Delhi Customs House. But I incline to the latter course on account of the revenue which that separate custom house produces, amounting now, I believe, to six lakhs." It was to determine this vexed question that Fortescue was asked to make a thorough investigation of the Delhi customs system and submit recommendations for its future conduct. In the report which he presented on 22nd July 1820, the Commissioner gave Metcalfe his due for the reforms made in 1817 and 1818; but he did not attempt to hide the fact that he thought the criticisms voiced by Rutherford and Bailey were justified.

Fortescue described the customs system of the Delhi Territory in a report of 297 paragraphs: and as this document, more than any other measure, was influential in securing the abolition of the system it decried, its salient features are worthy of consideration. After dealing with the evils implicit in the methods of collecting the customs and town dues, the Commissioner described in some detail the varying types of goods upon which duties were exacted; and concluded by drawing a comparison between the intolerable burden which such a system imposed on the inhabitants of the Delhi Territory and the more fortunate lot of

the Company's subjects in the older provinces.

Most of the customs or transit duties were collected at the Kurore or Delhi Customs House, where all articles of trade passing through the city were examined, duties paid, and rowannahs or passes issued. There were also twenty-three chokees or customs posts in the outlying regions of the Delhi Territory where a similar procedure took place. Until 1819, the First Assistant to the Resident was in charge of the sayar collections as of other branches of the revenue, but the actual work was done by ill-paid native officials or chokeedars who, according to ancient usage, considered it their perquisite to extort what they could from the merchants whose goods they examined. It was to the interference and exactions of these officials that Metcalfe attributed many of the vexations about
31
which people complained so bitterly.

The greater part of the sayar revenue in the Delhi Territory came from the customs duties levied on goods in transit; but there were also town dues imposed on goods sold or consumed within the towns and larger villages. Only a few articles expressly mentioned were exempt. The town duties varied from
32
1 to 25 per cent; and the Kirana or list of articles liable to tax, originally comprised 716 commodities. Metcalfe had reduced these to 519; but he had made little change in the

31. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 13th May. 1819. No. 65.

32. Fortescue's Customs Report para. 61.

method of collecting the duties. The Maratha practice of farming these to the highest bidder still persisted; although such a practice profitted neither the consumer nor the government. A typical case was the Ganj Gawan or tax on the sale of cattle and milk. Farmed out to a native collector it produced a revenue of Rs.1.620: when managed by customs officials³³ the duty amounted to Rs 38,072-2-1. There were many other anomalies which Metcalfe had left unaltered. Certain independent chiefs, for example, were exempt from paying any customs dues; different amounts were collected on the same article according as the purchaser was a Muhammadan or a Hindu; and on some articles sold in the city of Delhi a double tax was³⁴ imposed, part of which went to the King and part to government.

To illustrate the almost unbelievable intricacy of the rates imposed, Fortescue took as an example the Houz Kaquz or duty on³⁵ paper manufactured in the city of Delhi. There were ten different kinds of paper, each made in four or five qualities, amounting in all to thirty-nine classes. On each of these a different duty was levied according as paper was used in the city, exported from it, or consumed in other towns of the Delhi Territory. In all, 1248 variations were involved in

33. Fortescue's Customs Report. paras 77-80
34. Ibid. para. 199.
35. Ibid. paras. 71-76.

realising the government dues. Many of the articles listed in the Kirana such as paper, cattle, leather, wood, and grain, had been liable to tax from time immemorial: others, such as cambrics, muslins, and wines, had been taxed only since the British took possession. Fortescue was convinced that any attempt to standardise or reform such a system was impossible. He thought that to do so " would create more murmur and dissatisfaction " than would an increase in their present heavy burdens.³⁶ There was only one other solution - to abandon the whole system and bring Delhi into line with the customs regulations prevailing in the Company's older provinces.

The customs code of the Regulation Provinces had been laid down by Regulations LX & X of 1810; and compared with the Delhi customs system, it was simple in the extreme. Town duties were confined to a few specified articles of consumption; and duty was only levied once on goods in transit, when they entered or left the Bengal presidency. Fortescue drew a comparison between the working of this system in the Ceded and Conquered Provinces, (the nearest Regulation Province to the Delhi Territory) and the Delhi customs system. The Ceded and Conquered Provinces were approximately eight times the size of the Delhi Territory; yet in the last year of Metcalfe's residency, the town duties collected in the city of Delhi exceeded those collected in the whole of this large province. Instead of the multiplicity of

duties levied in 163 towns and villages of the Delhi Territory, duties were collected at eleven stations in the Ceded and Conquered Provinces, and all articles were taxed according to a standard book of rates.³⁷ Fortescue had no doubt at all that were the Delhi Territory placed on a similar footing to the Regulation Provinces, a great burden would be lifted from the people, and trade would soon revert to its normal channels. The recommendations thus made by the Commissioner were adopted in their entirety in 1823 when the Delhi customs house was abolished, and the sayer collections in the Delhi Territory were regulated in accordance with those of the Bengal Provinces.³⁸

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The instructions issued to Fortescue at the beginning of his³⁹ Commissionership initiated few changes in the judicial procedure of the Delhi Territory. In civil matters, the main difference was that all suits had to be instituted in the zillah courts of the Principal Assistant in whose division the dispute occurred, instead of as formerly, in the court of petty suits. The Principal Assistant could then refer minor cases not exceeding Rs.1000 to the sudder amin. Similarly, in criminal cases, minor offences could be referred by the

37. Fortescue's Customs Report. para.284 - 285.
38. Vide infra chapter 6. p.204.
39. Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations. 26th March 1819.No.8.

Principal Assistant to the Muhammedan or Hindu law officer, who was empowered to pass sentences not exceeding thirty days' imprisonment or a fine of Rs.50. With regard to the police, the general system prevailing in Metcalfe's time was to be continued; and the Commissioner was vested with the right to ask the Resident for detachments of najibs or irregular horse to guard the gaols and treasuries.

After nearly two years' experience of this system, Fortescue presented a report⁴⁰ in which the main recommendation was that, apart from certain minor modifications, civil and criminal justice should continue to be dispensed as in Metcalfe's time. A few years later, some aspects of Metcalfe's judicial system evoked stringent criticism from the Board of Revenue for the Western Provinces;⁴¹ but in 1820, Fortescue had little but praise to bestow. His report gave, for the first time, a full record of the daily working of the judicial administration both in civil and criminal cases. Whereas Metcalfe, in 1815, had stated the general principles upon which justice was dispensed in the Delhi Territory and depicted the judicial procedure in broad outline, Fortescue's report supplied the authorities in Calcutta with detailed knowledge which had not previously been available.

The Commissioner was in complete agreement with Metcalfe that disputes in the Delhi villages were best adjusted by the village

40. Fortescue's Judicial Report.

(Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations. 29th Dec.1820.No.3)

41. Vide. chapter 6. p.220.

42

panchayets; and in his report, he confined his observations to the working of the petty courts presided over by the sudder amins, the zillah courts of the Principal Assistants, and the Commissioner's court of appeal. Fortescue approved and gave every encouragement to the settlement of civil disputes by arbitration, even to the extent of remitting the institution fee already paid to the court by the litigants.⁴³ The Commissioner thought that, in general, the courts were suited to the people and were working efficiently. "There is no delay in the courts as there are no arrears," he wrote.⁴⁴ "Suitors are enabled to get their regular causes finished in the course of two or three months -- The detail in each of the courts is defined and well-comprehended -- The promulgated rules are few and simple --- I am not aware that more rules -- are at present particularly called for. The simplicity and readiness with which business is now conducted might be endangered."

Unlike Metcalfe, Fortescue had a special word of commendation for the native officials who worked in the courts of civil justice. Of the sudder amins he wrote, "I record with great pleasure that they perform the duty entrusted to them in the most unexceptional manner;"⁴⁵ and he proceeded to raise their monthly salary to Rs.250 on the ground that "native agency, liberally rewarded and controlled, is not only

42. Fortescue's Judicial Report. para 69
43. Ibid. para 59
44. Ibid. paras 34 - 38
45. Ibid. paras 39 - 52

safe but superior in many cases to European." In like manner, he described the Qasis who drew up and attested official papers as "a meritorious description of public functionaries;" and commenting on the authorised vakils, who laid bare the salient features of a case from the mass of conflicting evidence, he wrote "I have nowhere heard such fair, plain, and intelligent reasoning." Neither did Fortescue share Metcalfe's contempt for native witnesses. "It has been reported to me that witnesses are easily procured in this town for a very small sum and that false documents are fabricated"--- he wrote; "from my enquiries on the subject, I have little doubt that the crimes of perjury and forgery are of comparatively rare occurrence." In fact, the Commissioner thought the legal procedure of the Delhi courts compared favourably with similar courts in the Regulation Provinces; and he was fully in favour of continuing the system as he found it.

With regard to the dispensation of criminal justice, Fortescue was of the opinion that the time had not yet come for the printed code of the Regulation Provinces to be introduced into the Delhi Territory. He thought the lack of rules in criminal procedure no drawback to a people who were still in a state of "docile wildness" so long as the general principles of the regulation code were followed. Apart from burglaries in Delhi and the larger towns, the main crimes were still connected with

the stealing of buffaloes and cows, and the violent affrays which
 often accompanied such raids.⁴⁷ Fortescue heartily endorsed
 the system by which the villages were held responsible for
 stolen property traced to them; and he was a firm believer in
 the efficacy of leaving the village panchayet to investigate
 the facts of robbery, violence, or murder connected with its
 inhabitants. He thought that the local assembly was far more
 suited to the task than the official thanadars; and suggested
 that these police officers should gradually be withdrawn from
 the villages, and their services confined to the larger towns.⁴⁸

The success of this comparatively simple system of village
 responsibility had greatly impressed the Commissioner. "It is
 universally believed here that this responsibility is the main
 security of this Territory," he wrote,⁴⁹ "and that to abandon
 it would be to let the villages, as formerly, loose upon one
 another and all the world." Whether a different system,
 dependent for its working upon troops, thanadars, and punishments
 might ultimately be established, he was doubtful. "I should be
 unfeignedly sorry to see the essay," he observed. The success
 of the system of collective responsibility in the villages
 hinged on the promptitude shown by those in authority in
 securing the recovery of stolen property and in exacting
 recompense.

47. Fortescue's Judicial Report. paras 97 - 104.

48. Ibid. paras 122 - 143

49. Ibid. (~~see footnote opposite~~)
 paras 144 - 148

Fortescue had not been many months in Delhi before he discovered that the division of authority between the Resident and the Commissioner as laid down by the Governor-General's Resolution of 6th February 1819 threatened to dislocate the whole system of collective responsibility. Many of the violent affrays resulting in murder and robbery originated in the territories of independent chiefs and jagirdars whose lands bordered and intersected the Delhi Territory and with whom the Commissioner had no direct contact. All attempts to restore stolen property taken out of the Delhi Territory or to procure witness from across its boundaries had to be made by the Resident; and the resulting delay was one of the main causes of friction between Ochterlony and the Commissioner. Fortescue stated the case bluntly after he had been in office six months. "There are no longer any direct communications from the Assistants or myself ever allowed," he complained, "-----and complainants are now informed ---- that an application will be made to me, who will make another to the Resident, who will write to the Chief; and when an answer is received, they will know the result. -----Petitioners have actually come to me to complain of the Assistant for not having caused the restitution of their stolen cows --- or for having omitted to assist them in tracing the property and the thieves, according to the peculiar and astonishingly successful practice of this part of the country."

Another important aspect of the Commissioner's judicial work concerned prisoners under sentence in the gaols. Fortescue stated in his report⁵¹ that in 1820 there were 509 men under sentence in the Delhi gaol, 38 of whom were imprisoned for life: there were 18 female prisoners, three of them sentenced to perpetual imprisonment; and there were 57 boys. In a few cases, Fortescue reviewed and reduced the longer sentences;⁵² but his main concern was that the prisoners should be adequately supervised and employed on useful work. In this connection he applied for and received authority to engage a European overseer to superintend convicts repairing roads at some distance from the gaol.⁵³ Other prisoners were employed inside the gaol on such tasks as watching the sick, grinding grain for food, and making fetters or iron tools. The young boys detained in "the house of industry" were a problem; for Fortescue thought that Metcalfe's plan of reforming these young delinquents had several drawbacks. "I have thought upon the subject with great earnestness" he wrote,⁵⁴ "and I wish I could say that I was impressed with its utility." The constant association of fifty to sixty young offenders, ranging in age from six to eighteen resulted in vicious practices and frequent deterioration of the younger lads. Nor

51. Fortescue's Judicial Report. para 116.

52. Vide infra chapter 6 p.

53. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. W.P. 17th September. 1819. Nos. 5&6.

54. Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations. W.P. 29th December. 1820. No. 7.

did they, as a rule, make use of the crafts taught to them in prison; but when released, reverted to their former practices. "The frequency of their being re-apprehended is scarcely credible," declared the Commissioner. "Their adroitness in snatching, jostling, knocking off turbans----cutting off and picking pockets----is not perhaps excelled in our own country." Fortescue suggested that some of these evils would be avoided if the delinquents, on conviction, were placed in the charge of "respectable Europeans or Natives " for a definite period, on the understanding that their "masters" would be responsible for them and train them. The scheme was approved by Government, who suggested that the young criminals should also be given instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic.

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The main judicial recommendations of Fortescue's report were accepted by the Governor-General in Council who resolved that the system of civil and criminal judicature in the Delhi Territory should continue on the same basis. The collective responsibility of the villages for maintaining law and order within their boundaries was confirmed; as was the arrangement, especially approved by the Commissioner, whereby the Principal Assistants wielded the powers of "collectors, judges, magistrates, and custom officers" within their own divisions. Considerable perturbation, however, was caused by Fortescue's final conclusion that the office and powers of the Commissioner should be reunited

to those of the Resident. During his two years of office Fortescue had gradually been driven to the conclusion that his position as Commissioner was untenable; and when his reports were completed and his files cleared of current suits, he took the opportunity to resign the Company's service on the plea of ill-health.⁵⁷ He had done valuable work in Delhi; and had he remained in office, many of the mistakes of the next five years might have been avoided.

Friction between the Resident and the Commissioner had been from the first inherent in the exercise of their respective powers. It was due also to a fundamental difference of character and temperament in the two men. Fortescue, the capable efficient civil servant, was anxious to speed the work of the courts by every possible means; and burked at the necessity of appealing to the Resident in the many semi-political cases which came up for trial.⁵⁸ He sent particulars of such cases to the Resident in Persian as they were written in the court files; but Ochterlony, who could not read Persian,⁵⁹ regarded such rubakarīs as an affront to his dignity. He complained to the Governor-General in Council, asking that the Commissioner should be instructed to correspond with him in English. "If his lordship should see the subject in the light I do," he wrote, "the consequence will be that I shall be able

56. Fortescue's Judicial Report. 175 - 176.
 57. Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations. 29th Dec. 1820. No. 5.
 58. Bengal Political Consultations. 26th Sept. 1819. No. 47.
 59. Ibid. 16th Oct. 1819. No. 45.

to give my own orders to my own people for the accomplishment of Mr Fortescue's wishes, instead of hearing from my own people what Mr Fortescue thought proper to dictate, in a foreign language, to the Resident to perform." It was inevitable that the Resident's authority should be upheld; and Fortescue was instructed to discontinue the practice of communicating with the Resident by Persian rubakaris.⁶⁰

The growing realisation that the Resident's authority had been curtailed by the separation of the civil and political jurisdictions in Delhi caused Ochterlony to cling so tenaciously to the discretionary power vested in him in semi-political cases that the Commissioner found it practically impossible to procure witnesses in important murder trials if they had taken refuge, as they frequently did, in the lands of independent chiefs. Appeals to Government for a decision in disputes of this kind between the Resident and Commissioner were frequent in 1819 and 1820.⁶¹

A typical case occurred when Richard Cavendish, Assistant in the Southern Division of the Delhi Territory, wrote to the Resident requesting him "to have the goodness" to write to the Raja of Jaipur "desiring him to keep up a good police on our borders --- and to act in union with ⁶² our police in the apprehension of offenders." To Ochterlony this seemed a flagrant insult; and instead of sending the letter to Jaipur, he forwarded Cavendish's letter to the Governor-General, observing that he was anxious to know whether

60. Bengal Political Consultations. 16th Oct. 1819. No. 49.

61. Ibid. 30th Oct. 1819. No. 21

and 18th Mar. 1820. No. 22.

62. Ibid. 7th Aug. 1819. No. 43.

it was the pleasure of his Lordship in Council that he "should be elevated into positive insignificance according to Mr Fortescue's plan or reduced to the state of servitude desired by Mr Cavendish."⁶³ The result was a reprimand to Cavendish⁶⁴ and a vindication of the Resident's prestige and authority. Only in purely judicial matters was a decision given in the Commissioner's favour.⁶⁵ Otherwise, the Resident's discretionary power to secure witnesses from outside the Delhi Territory was upheld.⁶⁶

It was not surprising that Fortescue felt that he was little more than "the channel of communication" between the Assistants who dealt with the detailed work of their divisions and the Resident "who alone has power to direct and control."⁶⁷ As a result, Delhi lost the services of a first-rate Commissioner; and on Fortescue's departure, the Governor-General in Council decided to abolish the office of Commissioner and replace the conduct of civil affairs in the hands of the Resident.⁶⁸ In theory, the Resident's power was to be supreme in all departments of the administration: and an officer, to be known as the

63. Bengal Political Consultations. 7th Aug. 1819. No. 42.

64. Ibid. " " No. 44.

65. Ibid. 18th Mar. 1820. No. 22. (eg. when Fortescue's decision in the civil Court was upheld, in spite of the fact that one of the plaintiffs was a jagirdar, the Nawab Ahmed Buksh Khan.)

66. Bengal Political Consultations. 15th April. 1820. No. 35

67. Ibid. 16th Oct. 1819. No. 47

68. Ibid. 26th Aug. 1820. No. 32

Deputy Superintendent, was to officiate in the Resident's name in revenue and judicial matters. All communications from Government on civil affairs were to be addressed to the Resident; and all revenue and judicial statements were to be made to Government by the Resident. He was also to have complete control over the Principal Assistants in their divisions, and over the other Assistants working on revenue and judicial matters. In practice, however, the Resident was not to be burdened with the detail of civil administration. "The object of the present modification," wrote Metcalfe, "is confined to removing the inconvenience which has been experienced from the collision of two independent authorities within the Territory."

Thus the experiment of separating the political and civil authority in Delhi had been tried and had failed: but the appointment of a Deputy Superintendent under the Resident was only a temporary expedient. William Fraser held the office until Ochterlony left Delhi in October 1821 when J.H.Middleton⁶⁹ was asked to take charge of the Delhi Residency. He dealt both with political and civil matters for six months, until a further reorganisation placed the internal administration of the Delhi Territory under the Board of Revenue for the Western Provinces.⁷⁰

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69. Bengal Political Consultations. 13th Oct. 1821. No. 5
70. vide chapter 6. p. 185.

In the political sphere, little of importance occurred during Ochterlony's short residency. With the royal family of Delhi his relations were considerate and cordial: and the Resident did his best to preserve one of the last vestiges of sovereignty remaining to the King when he pleaded for the retention of the Delhi mint and the coinage of the small number⁷¹ of Delhi rupees which still bore the likeness of Akbar 11. But the Governor-General was adamant that the time had come for such relics of a former prerogative to be abandoned; and⁷² Ochterlony was obliged to close the Delhi mint, and pay the King's stipend in Farrukhabad rupees which henceforth were the⁷³ only legal coins to be used throughout the Delhi Territory. A further rebuff was administered by Hastings when Ochterlony was requested to inform the King that his message of congratulation to George IV on his accession to the English throne could not be forwarded to England. "The attempt thus made to establish an epistolary intercourse with the King of England"⁷⁴ observed the Governor-General "is rather incongruous and should be discouraged to the uttermost." Finally, it was Ochterlony's duty, a few months before his departure from Delhi, to convey to the King the condolences of the Governor-General in Council on the occasion of the death at Allahabad

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| 71. | Bengal Political Consultations. | 15th Mar. 1819. | No. 36 |
| 72. | Ibid. | " " | No. 38 |
| 73. | Ibid. | 14th Aug. 1819. | No. 17 |
| 74. | Ibid. | 17th Mar. 1821. | No. 74 |

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of the King's favourite son Jehangir. The fortunes of the royal house of Delhi had indeed sunk low.

It was to Ochterlony's credit that during the three years of his Residency, the tranquility of the northern and western frontiers of the Delhi Territory remained unbroken. His long experience in dealing with the Sikhs of the Cis-Sutlej region stood him in good stead when trouble threatened in this area. The main source of friction was caused by William Fraser's action in settling ryots and disbanded soldiers in the disputed villages and wastelands along the Patiala and Bikaner frontiers and in collecting revenue from them. Ochterlony, who had been Resident in 1805 when Lord Lake issued sanads to the chiefs on the Delhi frontiers defining their lands and rights,⁷⁶ strongly criticised Fraser's action and asked for an impartial investigation to determine to whom the disputed tracts were originally assigned.⁷⁷ The Governor-General in Council⁷⁸ condemned "the irregularity of Mr Fraser's conduct" and a committee of investigation was eventually appointed to arbitrate; but several years elapsed before its findings⁷⁹ were put into operation.

In Rajputana, during the years of Ochterlony's Residency,

75. Bengal Political Consultations. 28th July. 1821. No. 52.

76. vide supra chapter 2. p. 28

77. Bengal Political Consultations. 10th March. 1821. No. 16.

78. Bengal Letters Received. 13th June. 1823. para 104.

79. The Bikaner boundary was adjusted in 1838 as a result of the findings of a commission under Capt. Thoresby. Several Harijana villages were transferred to Bikaner in 1863 as a reward for the Raja's services in the Mutiny.

the states were readjusting themselves to the implications of British paramouncy--some more easily than others. To intervene in the internal affairs of states in subordinate alliance with the British Government had never been the desire of the Governor-General in Council or the Court of Directors; and applications from rulers of such states as Jodhpur,⁸⁰ who sought assistance from the paramount power to subdue their rebellious thakurs, were resisted whenever possible. The only case of direct intervention in the internal administration of the Rajput states occurred in Jaipur where the birth of a posthumous son to the late Raja⁸¹ had placed absolute power in the hands of the Regent Ranee, with disastrous results. Between 1819 and 1821 general mismanagement and corruption were rife; and a palace riot, when thirty lives were lost, finally caused Ochterlony to suggest either that he went in person to Jaipur to restore order, or that a British Political Agent should be stationed there.⁸² Reluctantly, the Governor-General decided to intervene; and Captain Stewart, Acting Resident at Sindia's court, was sent to Jaipur with instructions to correct the "flagrant abuses in the expenditure and resources of the state".⁸³ But the case of Jaipur was exceptional. Elsewhere in Rajputana, the extension of British protection had a beneficial and tranquilising effect.

80. Bengal Letters Received 24th April 1823 para 74

2nd May 1823 para 73

(The affairs of Jodhpur had been transferred back to Delhi at the request of the Rajah.)

81. Bengal Political Consultations. 3rd June 1819. No. 24

82. Bengal Letters Received. 13th June 1823. para 90

83. Bengal Political Consultations. 30th June 1821. No. 8.

In 1821, however, events occurred which were to bring Ochterlony into closer relations with the Rajput states and sever his connection with Delhi. Lord Hastings decided on a re-organisation of political posts in Central India; with the result that Sir Charles Metcalfe was appointed to the Residency of Hyderabad⁸⁴ with a wide political jurisdiction over the adjoining states, and Ochterlony was asked to succeed Sir John Malcolm as Resident in Malwa and Rajputana. In his new office, Ochterlony was to exercise supervision not only over Malwa and the Rajput states of Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Kishenghur; but all matters concerning Bharatpur, Alwur, and Ajmer, hitherto under the control of the Resident at Delhi, were transferred to his charge.⁸⁵ This re-organisation, three years after treaties of subordinate alliance had been concluded with the states of Central India, indicated that in the eyes of Hastings, Malwa rather than Delhi had become the centre of political importance. The only political duties remaining to the Resident at Delhi were matters relating to the Sikh and Hill Chiefs, the Raja of Bikaner, Ranjit Singh of Lahore, and the ex-Kings of Kabul and Afghanistan.⁸⁶ These matters, the Governor-General considered, would occupy so little of the Resident's time that he would be able to devote it almost exclusively to the internal administration of the Delhi

84. Bengal Political Consultations. 30th Jan. 1821. No. 30.

85. Bengal Letters Received. 13th June 1823. 119-126.

86. Bengal Political Consultations. 13th October. 1821. No. 5.

Territory.

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Thus when Ochterlony departed to Malwa in November 1821, the Delhi Residency was bereft of much of its former prestige. Three years earlier, Metcalfe had held complete civil and political jurisdiction over the entire Delhi Territory, the direct weight of his authority being felt by even his newest assistants. The division of the Territory into districts, with the revenue and judicial powers delegated to the Principal Assistants, had of necessity emphasised the importance of the men on the spot subject though they were to the Resident's control. Middleton's six months' charge of the Delhi Residency after Ochterlony's departure was little more than an interim arrangement pending further changes which were to place the internal administration of the Delhi Territory under the Board of Revenue for the Western Provinces; and convert the Resident with his restricted political duties, into the Governor-General's Agent at Delhi.

87. Bengal Political Consultations. 24th November. 1821. No. 19

Chapter 6.

The Administration of the Delhi Territory under the Board of Revenue for the Western Provinces. 1822-1825.

The years which elapsed between Fortescue's resignation and Metcalfe's second residency were a period of administrative confusion and uncertainty in the history of the Delhi Territory; for early in 1822, Lord Hastings decided to put into operation a scheme at which he had hinted three years earlier, namely that the Delhi Territory should be administered in the same manner as any other province of the Company's possessions.¹ To achieve this, the Governor-General decided to abolish the office of Deputy Superintendent which Middleton had held for a few months, and place the administration of the Delhi Territory under the Board of Revenue for the Western Provinces, a body which already had charge of the government of the Ceded and Conquered Provinces across the Jumna. By this decision Hastings not only set aside Fortescue's recommendation that the civil and political functions of government should be re-united in the hands of one officer; but by linking the administration of the Delhi Territory to a province already governed according to the Regulations, the Governor-General took the first step towards implementing the policy of incorporating it within the regulation system. He

1. Vide supra chapter 4 p. 150.

made his intention abundantly clear in his Resolution of 14th February 1822² which instituted the new government. "There are now no circumstances connected with the Delhi Territory to require or justify the delegation of arbitrary power to the executive officer;" he wrote. "The extent, populousness, and growing value of the Delhi Territory, its great importance with relation to the commercial interests of the Western Provinces, and its full and final recognition as an integral part of the British dominions, all suggest the propriety of placing it on a footing with our other districts." Time was to prove this step premature; and the Court of Directors, on hearing of the new arrangement, were doubtful of its wisdom: but they thought it would afford a favourable opportunity "of appreciating the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the opposite systems of civil administration prevailing on the left and right bank of the Jumna"³

The Board thus vested with the administration of the Delhi Territory consisted of three members of whom Alexander Ross and Walter Ewer already constituted the Board of Commissioners for the Ceded and Conquered Provinces. They were joined by William Fraser, and their headquarters were transferred to Delhi. Ross was appointed the senior member of the Board, but he presided over its deliberations for little more than six months; and

2. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 14th Feb. 1822. No. 4

3. Bengal Despatches (Rev. C. & C. P.) 24th Sept. 1824. para. 36.

when he left Delhi in December 1822, his place as Senior Member was taken by Charles Elliott. As regards the Delhi Territory, the Board was the final authority under the Governor-General in Council for all revenue and judicial matters hitherto under the control of the Civil Commissioner. The political power formerly exercised by the Resident remained separated from the civil authority, even though it was exercised by the Senior Member of the Board. It was held in the first place by Ross and later by Elliott, both officers in their political capacity acting as Agent to the Governor-General in the Western Provinces.

The members of the Board were all men of ability and distinctive character; but events soon showed that they were incapable of working together. The most accommodating as well as the most far-seeing was Elliott who had had considerable administrative experience in the Regulation Provinces.⁴ Ewer, the third member was a fervid upholder of the Regulations; and from the first, tended to regard the system of government prevailing in the Delhi Territory as irregular and inefficient. Yoked to these two disciples of the regulation system was William Fraser, the second member of the Board, who even in the days of Metcalfe's Residency had frequently pursued his own course. Under the new régime, he persistently and defiantly championed the older system of Delhi administration whenever

4. He had been Collector at Alighar; Judge and Magistrate at Farrukhabad, and Judge of the Court of Appeal at Bareilly - Prinsep "General Register."

there was any question of introducing the more definite arrangements prescribed by the Regulation Code. It was not surprising, therefore, to find that the Board's communications with the Governor-General in Council frequently took the form of three separate and discordant minutes; and that lack of cohesion in the governing authority was in part responsible for a declining revenue and a state of unrest which sometimes broke out into open disorder. The transition from " the old Delhi system " to the adoption of the Regulation Code could not have been attempted under less auspicious circumstances.

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During the years of the Board's administration of the Delhi Territory, political matters occupied a comparatively minor role; though Alexander Ross raised an important issue in connection with the claims of the King of Delhi. As Agent to the Governor-General, he had inherited a very limited jurisdiction compared with that exercised by former Residents, most of the political duties having been transferred to the Resident in Malwa and Rajputana.⁵ Apart from his dealings with the Court of Delhi, the Agent's main duties were connected with the jagirdars who still held estates within the Delhi Territory, and neighbouring independent rulers among the most important of whom were Ranjit Singh of Lahore, the two ex-Kings of Kabul who resided at Ludhiana, the Raja of Bikaner, and the Rana of Dholpur Bari.

5. vide supra chapter 5. p.180.

He also retained a general superintendence over the affairs of the Protected Sikh and Hill States, though the actual administration of these territories was in the hands of a Deputy Superintendent.⁶

The curtailment of the political duties of the Governor-General's representative at Delhi, marked as it was by the substitution of the term "Agent" for the more dignified title of Resident, was given outward emphasis by the decision to discontinue the Resident's Table Allowance and to disband his

escort.⁷ Ochterlony had taken half the escort with him to Malwa; and soon after Ross's appointment, the rest of the troop was disbanded, a contingent of Skinner's Horse being placed at the Agent's disposal for his official use.⁸ He

relinquished also responsibility for the treasury at Delhi, which was placed under the authority of the Board and was directly controlled by the Principal Assistant of the Centre Division.⁹ These changes, so obvious in their intention,

could not fail to attract the notice of the King of Delhi; more especially as the Governor-General had decided to dispense with the formality of writing to inform him that a new representative had been accredited to his court. Hastings felt

6. Bengal Letters Received. 12th Sept. 1823. paras. 34 & 35

7. Bengal Political Consultations. 24th May 1822. No. 31.

8. Ibid. 16th Aug. 1822. No. 9

9. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 8th Aug. 1822. No. 67.

that he could no longer write in the character of "fiduce Akbar Shah;" and accordingly he caused this phrase to be erased from the Governor-General's seal, as being "inconsistent with the rank and station of the head of the supreme government of India."¹⁰ Akbar, who resented keenly any diminution of his prestige, was affronted; and the slight was further emphasised when the Governor-General issued instructions that all direct epistolary correspondence between himself and the King of Delhi¹¹ was to cease.

It fell to Alexander Ross as Agent to inform the King of the Governor-General's decision; and to receive the King's renewed demand for an increased stipend. Ross, who had been for some time the Governor-General's Agent in the Ceded and Conquered Provinces, reacted strangely to the environment of his new office at the court of Delhi. In the Ceded and Conquered Provinces, he had had to deal with people of no greater rank than the¹² Nawab of Farrukhabad and the jagirdars of the Doab. Brought into close contact at Delhi with the King and the royal family, he developed a curious sympathy for the fallen fortunes of the royal house. For the first time at Delhi there was an officer in charge of political relations with the court who had not witnessed the evolution of the King's position and his claims

10. Bengal Political Consultations. 20th March. 1822. No. 41

11. Vide infra Chapter 8 and the Note by the Persian Secretary. Bengal Political Consultations. 21st Sept. 1827. No. 68.

12. Bengal Letters Received. 12th Sept. 1823. para 35.

over the years; and Akbar's renewed requests for a revision of the arrangements concerning the royal stipend caused Ross to study closely the records relating to the subject in the Residency archives. As a result, he became convinced of the justice of the King's demands; and once he had quitted Delhi and handed over his office, he wrote to the Governor-General in Council upholding the King's cause.

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In a letter dated 25th February 1823, he explained how he came to adopt such an unorthodox point of view. "During the time I was in Delhi," he wrote, "the King repeatedly intimated to me his desire that I would take into consideration the subject of the Royal Stipends, giving me to understand that he expected an augmentation of them proportionate to the increased revenue of the Territory which was assigned in 1805 for the support of the royal household --- For this task I had not leisure while I remained at Delhi; but on departing from that city, I took with me documents, not doubting that they would enable me --- to convince the King --- that it would be inadvisable to advance a claim of the nature premeditated. The documents, however," " added Ross, "did not enable me to submit to His Majesty an explanation calculated to produce the effect on his mind which I wished; and I therefore remained silent."

The document which convinced Ross that Akbar had right on

his side was an "ekrah nameh" delivered to Shah Alam in 1804¹⁴ bearing Ochterlony's signature. It was based on the "Notes of Instructions to the Resident at Delhi" issued by Lord Wellesley to Ochterlony in 1804; and it outlined the proposed settlement¹⁵ with the Mughal which was completed on 23rd May 1805. Whether Ochterlony acted wisely in committing to writing the gist of a semi-official document headed "Notes of Instructions" is questionable; more especially as these tentative proposals were modified in some important respects in the final settlement. It is certain, however, that the authorities at Calcutta were unaware that any such written evidence of Wellesley's intentions had been given to the King until Ross's letter of 25th February 1823 enlightened them. This paper in the King's possession was always referred to by Akbar as "the treaty" though no definite engagement was entered into with the Mughal, Wellesley having given explicit instructions to the contrary. In 1822, however, Akbar used it to support his claims not only for an augmented stipend, but for an augmentation proportionate to the increased revenue from the "Assigned Lands," quoting Article 8 of "the treaty" which stated "Should there be an increase in the collections from the above mehals in consequence of extended cultivation and the improved condition of the ryots, an augmentation to that

14. Home Miscellaneous Series vol.704. gives the printed version.

15. Vide supra chapter 2. pp. 16 - 24.

amount will take place in the King's pouch." Ross felt that Government was still bound by this clause to honour its obligation even though the whole matter had been re-examined and defined by Minto in 1809.¹⁶ "Government, it is true, was not under any obligation to make these promises," concluded Ross, "but as it voluntarily made them, it cannot, I conceive evade them by contending either that they were not intended or that --- the state of things---would ever exist." This was a new point of view; and one, moreover, which a few years later was to be adopted by no less a person than the President of the Board of Control when Rammohun Roy laid the King's case before the highest authorities in England.¹⁷ The importance of Ross's letter of 25th February 1823 lay in the fact that it brought to the notice of the Governor-General a hitherto unknown document in the King's possession which, in the eyes of a senior member of the Company's service, justified new and extensive claims by the King. Coinciding as it did with the departure of Hastings from India, it marked also the beginning of a new phase in the relationship between the court of Delhi and the Governor-General; for under Lord Amherst, Akbar's renewed attempts to raise the prestige of the royal house of Delhi were to meet with a measure of success.¹⁸

The question of the King's claims did not receive serious attention until Metcalfe returned to Delhi in 1826; and during

16. vide supra chapter 3. pp. 61 - 64.

17. vide infra chapter 8. p. 274.

18. vide infra chapter 7. pp. 239 et seq.

the three years that Charles Elliott held the office of Agent, little of political importance occurred. His main tasks were to maintain order on the northern and western frontiers; and to settle jagirs such as Hattin, Horul, and Pulwul which escheated to the British Government on the death of their holders.¹⁹

Apart from occasional intervention in badly-managed jagirs,²⁰ Elliott was chiefly concerned in maintaining peace between the restless Sikh and Hill tribes of the north-west. The number of these Protected States had increased considerably at the close of the Ghurkha War, when the Hill States lying between the Company's northern frontier and Nepal were annexed. The policy of resuming the estates of jagirdars who died also brought large tracts of land under the direct control of British officials.²¹ These lands were always difficult to administer. As far as was consistent with the maintenance of order, it was the policy of Government to allow local customs and institutions to continue undisturbed: but in 1822, Elliott found it imperative to intervene between the Sikh Sirdars and their feudatories who, under the cloak of tribal custom, were waging private war on a considerable scale. After censuring the Deputy Superintendent, Captain Ross, for allowing such a situation to develop unchecked, the

19. Bengal Letters Received. 31st May 1826. para 71

20. Dadree, for instance, which Elliott took out of the hands of Bahadur Jung, and gave in farm to Fyz Muhammed Khan who owned the adjoining territory.

Bengal Letters Received 31st May 1826. para 73

21. As in the case of Ambala, Belaspur, and Kardeh-Doon. Bengal Letters Received. 31st May 1826. paras. 44 & 45.

Governor-General in Council ordered a proclamation to be issued to the Sikh chiefs "forbidding in the most pointed terms all armed interference----in the disputes of their neighbours under the severest penalties-----even to the confiscation of their lands."²²

Incursions of marauders such as the Akali tribesmen from across the Sutlej also aggravated disorder on the north-west frontier of the Delhi Territory. Elliott, who thought that the invaders came with the connivance if not with the approval of Ranjit Singh, urged that the Raja should be asked to prohibit them from crossing into British territory.²³ In 1824, the Akalis ravaged the Sikh lands so extensively that troops from Patiala were called in to expel them; and a contingent of Skinner's Horse was placed at the disposal of the Deputy Superintendent²⁴ to be available in the event of further raids. No more serious matters than these frontier incursions disturbed the political horizon until 1825, when after Ochterlony's death, the decision was taken to transfer the political direction of affairs connected with Malwa and Rajputana back to Delhi.²⁵ Shortly afterwards, when Metcalfe returned as Resident, Elliott handed over his political office and left for Bareilly where, as Agent to the Governor-General, he turned his considerable political talents to the administration of the Ceded and Conquered Provinces.²⁶

22. Bengal Political Consultations. 7th Feb. 1823. No. 15.

23. Bengal Letters Received. 1st Sept. 1825. para. 21.

24. Bengal Political Consultations. 7th May. 1824. No. 20.

25. Ibid. 29th July 1825. No. 23.

26. Ibid. 16th Sept 1825. No. 77.

THE DIVISIONS OF THE DELHI TERRITORY 1832.



Photostat enlargement of map in the Select Committee's Report on East India Affairs to the House of Commons 1832. (Judicial vol.)

Political issues such as these lay outside the cognizance of the Board of Revenue, though unrest on the frontiers created administrative difficulties in adjacent areas of the Delhi Territory. This was particularly noticeable in the unwieldy Northern Division; and consequently in 1823, the Board took up William's Fraser's suggestion that this district should be divided. Fraser urged that its population of 380,000 people, producing fifteen to sixteen lakhs of revenue, was more than one person could supervise adequately. "When we superadd the character and habits of this population," he wrote, "the criminal and civil courts alone are as much as any one individual --- can manage!"²⁷ Largely as a result of this representation,²⁸ a fifth district with its centre at Rohtuk was formed. This new district, assessed at a total revenue of seven lakhs of rupees,²⁹ was placed in the charge of H.S. Oldfield at the same time as H. Graham and H.H. Thomas were appointed Principal³⁰ Assistants of the Western and Northern Districts. These officers, with Thomas Metcalfe in charge of the Centre Division and G.R. Campbell in the Southern Division, completed the roll of Principal Assistants who, under the controlling authority of

27. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 31st Oct. 1823. No. 24

28. It consisted of Rohtuk, Mandouthe, Khurkoda, & Gohanna from the Northern Division, and the parganas of Beree, Mohun, and Bhowanni from the Western Division.

Bengal Revenue Consultations. 26th March. 1824. Nos 69 & 70

29. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 31st Oct. 1823. No. 68.

30. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 31st Oct. 1823. No. 70.

the Board of Revenue, were responsible for the detailed working of the Delhi Districts. They exercised the powers of magistrates and collectors; and each held his court and had his revenue cutcherry at the sadr station of his area. A native staff was allocated to each Principal Assistant to help with the judicial and revenue business of the district.

The Board of Revenue inherited all the authority hitherto vested in the Civil Commissioner, together with responsibility for the Delhi treasury. Of these functions, the most important was the supervision and direction of the Principal Assistants; for upon the adequate discharge of this duty depended the Board's power to preserve that unity of control which had always been characteristic of Delhi administration. It was precisely here that they failed: and lack of adequate supervision more than any other factor was responsible for the deterioration of standards of efficiency in the administration of the districts which occurred during the period of the Board's authority. The main revenue function of the Board was to receive all collections, assessments, and reports made by the Principal Assistants, and present them to the Governor-General in Council. In the judicial sphere, they acted as the final court of appeal for all civil and criminal suits. Much of this work had perforce to be undertaken by individual members of the Board. William Fraser, for instance, was responsible for the general supervision

of all revenue matters throughout the Delhi Territory; and he shared with Walter Ewer the work of ^{gael} delivery. This division of labour left the Senior Member of the Board time to deal with his political duties as Agent and to preside over the court of appeal at Delhi but the Board was, however, collectively responsible for all decisions taken in its name.

It had been laid down by Government that the Board should make Delhi their headquarters; and they held their meetings in the central portion of the Residency where the Agent had his offices and apartments. This building also housed the treasury ³² which stood in a separate enclosure near the Hindustani Room where the official records were kept and the courts of appeal and circuit were held. In the treasury, collections from the five divisions of the Delhi Territory were received and safe-guarded; and it was the treasurer's duty to keep exact, detailed accounts of all money received and disbursed. Since 1803, this responsible position had remained in the hands of wealthy Indian bankers who received a nominal remuneration of Rs.200 a month for their services. ³³ In spite of this meagre salary, the position of treasurer was coveted for the prestige it brought to the holder; and no small stir was caused in 1824 when the discovery was made that Hurnurraïn, the treasurer, had embezzled four and a half lakhs of money

32. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 10th March 1825 No.50

33. Bengal Political Consultations. 5th June 1810 No.52.

from the Delhi Treasury. The transference of responsibility for the treasury to the Board of Revenue may have provided an opportunity for Hurnurraïn to use government money on a large scale for his own ventures. He had certainly been speculating with official funds for many years. Unable to face the disgrace of discovery, he took his own life;³⁵ and the ensuing enquiry, not only led to a reviewal of the whole system of treasury organisation at Delhi, but it brought home to the authorities at Calcutta and to the members of the Board of Revenue themselves how disastrous the absence of careful supervision could be.

As a result new and specific rules were prescribed for the safe-guarding and checking of bullion brought to the Delhi Treasury. In future, the Treasurer was to issue a written receipt for all monies he received, instead of making a verbal report as formerly. Bullion was to be checked at regular intervals; and both Principal Assistant and treasurer were to be jointly responsible for seeing that the amount registered corresponded with the sum actually in the treasury. To ensure that the register of accounts was kept accurately, an adequate staff of native book-keepers was appointed; and the Principal Assistant as well as the treasurer was to have access by key

34. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 7th May 1824 No.21.A.

35. Bengal Letters Received. (Rev.C.C.P.) 16th Aug.1827.para369.

to the treasure chests.³⁶ "Assuredly it was high time"
 remarked the Court of Directors on hearing of Hurnurrair's
 embezzlement, "that such reform should take place."³⁷ To
 simplify still further the work of the Delhi treasury, Government
 decided that separate treasuries were to be built in each of the
 five divisions of the Delhi Territory; and that remittances
 from Ludhiana were to be sent direct to the Accountant General
 at Calcutta instead of to Delhi.³⁸

The Accountant-General's report to Government on the method
 of conducting business in the Delhi treasury brought a sharp
 reprimand to the Board of Revenue for allowing such an irregular
 system to continue unchecked.³⁹ In defence, the Board pleaded
 that it was ignorant of the detailed arrangements in operation
 at the Delhi treasury, Ewer going so far as to declare that
 "the irregularities and errors" were "a natural consequence
 of the Delhi system --- which authorised every public officer,
 high or low, to do as he pleased and to take as little trouble
 as possible."⁴⁰ This criticism availed little; and only
 served to emphasise the Board's ultimate responsibility for
 all arrangements made by the Principal Assistants whom it
 controlled. "That the revenue officers of the Delhi Territory
 are not bound by rules equally precise as those established

- 36. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 2nd July 1824. No.42
- 37. Bengal Despatches 28th Jan.1829.paras 18 & 19.
- 38. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 16th July.1824.No.43.
- 39. Ibid. 2nd July.1824.No.43.
- 40. Ibid. " No.41.

in the Regulation Provinces is a circumstance which renders it the more necessary for the Board to ascertain the mode and principles of their proceedings," replied the Governor-General⁴¹ in Council. A further result of Hurnurrair's embezzlement was to draw attention to the multifarious duties which Thomas Metcalfe, the Principal Assistant of the Centre Division, had to perform; and it was largely responsible for the re-⁴²organisation of that important post in 1824.

When the Board of Revenue took office in 1822, it was commissioned by the Governor-General in Council to undertake two important revenue tasks: to complete the work of reforming the Delhi customs system as recommended by Fortescue in his⁴³ Customs Report; and to make a complete survey of revenue assessments and tenures in the five districts of the Delhi Territory, paying special attention to all lands under kham management. The Board made little progress with this revenue survey; but the abolition of the Delhi customs system was their most successful administrative achievement; and was the only important measure carried out with the concurrence of all three members.

In 1822, the unusually favourable condition of all branches of the Bengal administration prompted Lord Hastings to introduce

41. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 2nd July. 1824. No. 43.

42. vide infra pp. 207 - 208.

43. vide supra chapter. 5. p. 168.

certain measures of economic relief, among which was the abolition of the Delhi customs and town duties at a cost of an annual revenue of five lakhs of rupees. When asked by the Revenue Department to suggest suitable means of effecting this reform, the Board proposed that the Delhi Territory should be placed under the customs regulations already existing in the

Bengal Provinces. In particular they suggested that the rate of duty on goods passing through the Delhi Territory should be the same as that in force in the Regulation Provinces, and that it should apply to the same types of merchandise. With the exception of William Fraser, who advocated a line of customs posts on the western frontier of the Delhi Territory, the Board proposed that chokees should be set up along the western bank of the Jumna; and that each Principal Assistant should be empowered to issue rowannahs for goods passing through his district. The Board thought it essential that rowannahs thus granted should exempt goods in transit from further taxation during their passage throughout Bengal; and similarly that customs passes issued in the Regulation Provinces should entitle goods to proceed across the Delhi Territory without the imposition of further duties. With regard to town duties, the Board thought that only those articles liable to duty in the Regulation Provinces should be taxed in the Delhi Territory; and that

44. Bengal Separate Consultations. 29th May 1823.No.1.
Governor-General's Minute.

45. Bengal Separate Consultations. 30th Jan.1823. No.7.

Principal Assistants should collect town duties only at the large cities of Delhi, Rewari, Sonipat, Panipat, Kurnal, and Hansi.

These reforms were, in essence, those advocated by Fortescue; and they were adopted, with slight modifications, by the Governor-General in Council who issued instructions that they were to be implemented forthwith.⁴⁶ Government adopted the principle that the officers responsible for issuing rowannahs and collecting duties were to be the Principal Assistants; and that their sadr stations were to be the main centres at which town dues should be levied and transit duties collected. Regulation X of 1810 was to be applied to towns in the Delhi Territory; and all articles of consumption not specified therein were to be exempt from taxation. This regulation, however, was not to be applied too rigidly; and the Board was given discretionary power to retain "any of the existing duties on other articles -- likely to be productive without causing annoyance to the people:" but a list of all articles chargeable with duty had to be submitted to Government for approval. With regard to goods in transit, Government was not convinced that one line of customs posts along the Jumna would be sufficient to intercept all goods approaching the Delhi Territory from the west; and instead, they substituted three lines of chokees: the first running north to south along the river with its main centres at Delhi

and Panipat; the second running westward from Delhi to Bhatnir passing through Hansi; and a third line running southward from Delhi to Rewari.

Thus in 1823 the Delhi customs system came to an end and was replaced by the customs code of the Bengal provinces. Such a change of system necessitated the modification of several existing arrangements; and it devolved upon Elliott as Agent, to negotiate with the chiefs and jagirdars whose lands bordered British territory for the operation of a common system of transit duties.⁴⁷ For some years past, the King of Delhi had waived his right to collect customs dues in the city of Delhi in return for a monetary compensation; and Elliott sought a similar agreement with the Raja of Ballumghar, the Nawab Fyz Muhammed Khan, and Begam Samru. After ascertaining their average annual revenue from customs collections, Elliott concluded agreements whereby each chief would forego his right to levy separate transit duties in exchange for an annual sum from Government in compensation for loss of revenue.⁴⁸ This arrangement received a somewhat grudging consent from the Governor-General in Council who thought that Elliott could have struck a better bargain by persuading the chiefs to accept

47. Bengal Political Consultations. 17th Oct. 1823. No. 4.

48. Ibid.

6th June. 1823. Nos. 8 & 10.

& 13th June. 1823. Nos. 47 & 54.

a capital sum rather than a yearly payment. No such negotiation as this was possible with the chiefs of the Sikh and Hill States through whose domains came much of the trade from the Punjab and Afghanistan; for the treaties of 1809 and 1816 precluded the enforcement of any customs code in their territories.⁵⁰ Care was taken, however, to introduce it

whenever estates in these areas escheated to Government⁵¹ through default of heirs.

The introduction of the Bengal customs code also affected the salaries of the Principal Assistants of the Delhi Territory; and was a contributory cause of the reorganisation of the duties performed by the officer in charge of the Centre Division. Commission on the customs receipts had for many years formed an accepted part of the salary drawn by the First Assistant to the Resident; and when the Delhi Territory was divided into districts, this commission was shared between the Principal Assistants. The estimated annual deficit of five lakhs of rupees owing to the introduction of the regulation customs code would have brought considerable financial loss to these officers; and to prevent

49. Bengal Letters Received (Separate W.P.) 31st May. 1827 paras 48 and 49.

It was not until 1832 that the Begam Samru agreed to accept Rs. 4466.12.6 in commutation of her rights to collect duties at her ghats on the Jumna above and below Delhi. (Bengal Political Consultations. 8th Oct. 1832. No. 11.) Government considered this payment worthwhile to secure the unimpeded navigation of the Jumna; but they found the arrangement with Fyz Muhammed Khan and other Delhi jagirdars both uneconomic and ineffective, and in 1828 compensatory payments were abandoned.

Bengal Political Consultations. 19th Sept. 1828. No. 12.

50. Bengal Political Consultations. 28th Feb. 1823. No. 44.

51. As in the case of Ambala, Belaspur, & Kaardeh Doon. Bengal Letters Received. 31st May. 1826. paras. 45-47.

this, the Governor-General decided to increase their salaries by 50 per cent. By this measure, each Principal Assistant would receive a monthly salary of Rs.1,500; with the exception of Thomas Metcalfe in the Centre Division who was to receive Rs.2,000 in recognition of the fact that the City Division was the most arduous and important of all the Delhi Districts.⁵²

It had long been obvious to those acquainted with the work of the Centre Division of the Delhi Territory that supervision of the Delhi courts and the police, responsibility for the treasury, in addition to the administration of land revenue and customs, was more than one officer could adequately discharge; and within a year of the introduction of the regulation customs code, the Governor-General decided to reorganise the duties attached to this important post.⁵³ In this instance, he deviated from the principle of combining revenue and judicial duties in the hands of one officer by relieving Thomas Metcalfe of all save his judicial duties and responsibility for the Delhi police, and by appointing John Vaughan to take charge of the treasury and deal with all revenue business including customs. The new "collector," as he became known, had previously been in charge of the customs station at Meerut; and on taking office at Delhi, his main task was to organise and superintend the

52. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 20th March.1823.No.84.

53. Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations. 26th Aug.1824.No.1.

working of the new customs regulations throughout the Territory. His jurisdiction in customs administration extended beyond the Centre Division and even beyond the frontiers of the Delhi Territory; for he retained control of the Meerut customs house in the Doab, leaving the routine work there in charge of a deputy superintendent who was appointed to assist him. Within the Delhi Territory, the Principal Assistants remained responsible for sayer collections in their own districts; but they were instructed to report regularly to Vaughan, and in all matters connected with customs administration to regard themselves as his deputies.

The effect of this reorganisation was to make Delhi the centre of customs administration both for the Delhi Territory and a large area of the Doab. It also achieved its initial purpose of reducing the work of the Principal Assistant of the Centre Division to reasonable proportions; though no one resented these changes more than Thomas Metcalfe. He particularly disliked the loss of prestige which relinquishment of the treasury entailed; and he expressed his views on this subject so forcibly that he brought upon himself a severe reprimand from Government. "Any repetition by Mr Metcalfe of the like language," declared the Governor-General in Council "will lead infallibly to his immediate suspension from office;"⁵⁴ and Thomas Metcalfe had, perforce, to be content

with his magisterial work in the Delhi courts and with the control of the city police.

The customs code was the subject of a further decision in 1823 which concerned the collection of town duties.⁵⁵ In view of the great extension of trade and the increasing prosperity of the country generally, the Governor-General decided that all future proceeds from town duties should be used to improve the amenities of the cities from which they were collected. This concession applied to all towns throughout the Bengal Presidency; and in spite of the anticipated loss of five lakhs of revenue each year from the Delhi customs, it was extended to the Delhi Territory. The funds thus made available were to be administered by Committees of Local Improvement to be set up in all the large towns and were to be devoted to works of public utility. The Governor-General had in mind such public improvements as the digging of large tanks, the construction of drains and aqueducts, the laying-out of new streets and roads, and possibly some provision for educational needs. Except for occasional grants⁵⁶ for specific purposes, this was the first time public funds had been set aside for local improvements in Delhi. The Court

55. Bengal Separate Consultations. 29th May.1823.No.1.
Governor-General's Minute.

56. For instance, a grant for the construction of drains and bridges in Delhi was made to the Board of Revenue in June 1823: (Bengal Revenue Consultations. 19th June.1823.Nos.76 & 78) and the Jama Masjid was repaired after being struck by lightning. (Bengal Revenue Consultations.3rd July.1823.No.5.)

of Directors thought the plan an excellent one; and suggested that influential Indian gentlemen should be invited to serve on the Committees of Local Improvement.⁵⁷ " It would be a case," declared the Court, " in which a gratifying share of the management of their own concerns would be conferred without any risk upon the natives."

Committees of Local Improvement were duly formed in the chief towns of the Delhi Territory;⁵⁸ and it is significant that the first concern of the Delhi Committee was to plead for the erection of a school for both Indian and European pupils.⁵⁹ This, they thought, was the City's most pressing need; but they were unable to proceed with the project because Government decided to remove all educational matters from the jurisdiction of the Committees of Local Improvement and place them in the hands of a Committee of Public Instruction which had been set up in Calcutta.⁶⁰ The Delhi Committee, therefore, used the means at its disposal to improve the general amenities of the city. A large drain leading to the Raj Ghat was constructed;⁶¹ and the waters⁶² of the Delhi canal were brought into the main streets of the city.

- 57. Bengal Despatches. 17th Nov. 1826. (Separate.) para. 95.
- 58. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 1st July. 1824. No. 13.
- 59. Ibid. 12th Aug. 1824. No. 13.
- 60. Ibid. 12th Aug. 1824. No. 15.
- 61. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 1st Sept. 1825. No. 7.
- 62. Ibid. 17th Mar. 1825. No. 17.

The Committee also contributed towards the expense of repairing⁶³ the town wall of Hansi in the Western Division and to the⁶⁴ sinking of two pukka wells nearby at Begur.

Another fund which helped to improve the appearance of Delhi at this time was the income available from taiul, wuqf, and lowaris properties. In former times, certain lands, gardens, and shops had been bequeathed to provide money for the repair and upkeep of mosques and other religious buildings in Delhi, some of which were of great beauty. Through neglect and mismanagement, this revenue had shrunk to such minute proportions that many of the religious buildings of Delhi had fallen into a ruinous condition. It was Henry Middleton, Deputy Superintendent of the Delhi Territory in 1822, who brought this matter to the notice of Government; and he reorganised the administration of taiul property so successfully that the greatly increased rents enabled many repairs to be undertaken. "One musjid has already undergone a thorough repair," reported⁶⁵ Middleton; and he stated that for its future support a new range of shops had been built, "by which we have not only permanently provided for the expenses of the mosque establishment, but we have also formed a good clean street where before was only a dirty lane choked up with rubbish." This was

63. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 12th May 1825.No.13.
 64. Ibid. 26th Aug.1824.No.16.
 65. Delhi Agency Records. Middleton to Swinton.
 21st April 1822.

typical of the general improvements made in Delhi through the more efficient administration of taul properties; and the impetus given by Middleton was carried on by the Board of Revenue. They instituted a Committee of Local Agents, consisting of the Secretary to the Board, the Principal Assistant of the Centre Division, and the Civil Surgeon, to administer the rents from the taul lands;⁶⁶ and this income, together with the revenues available from town duty collections, provided the means whereby civic improvements could be carried out; and the city benefitted accordingly.

An interesting glimpse of Delhi and its buildings at this time was recorded by Bishop Heber who visited the city in 1824.⁶⁷ According to the Bishop, Delhi was seven miles in circuit; and in spite of its extensive ruins, was a noble city. "Its principal streets are really wide and handsome," he reported; "and for an Asiatic city, remarkably cleanly; and the shops in the bazaar have a good appearance --- There are a great number of mosques with high minarets and gilded domes; and above all are seen the palace, a very high and extensive cluster of Gothic towers and battlements; and the Jumma Masjid, the largest and handsomest place of Mussalman worship in India. The chief material of all these fine buildings is red granite --- inlaid in some of the ornamental parts with white marble; and the general style of building is of a

66. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 27th Aug. 1822. Nos. 31 & 32. 11

67. "Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India vol. 2. pp. 285 & 305. R. Heber. (London. 1828.)

simple and impressive character." Such was Delhi in 1824, when for the first time public funds were set apart for the preservation of its buildings and the development of its amenities. It was one of the achievements of the Board of Revenue that they supervised the administration of such revenues to good purpose.

The Board had little else to its credit. Apart from the reform of the customs and civic improvements, its administration seemed dogged by failure and misfortune. By the end of 1824, the Board had made so little progress with the task of surveying and re-assessing the villages of the Delhi Territory that they received a sharp reprimand from Government. They had not reported on the existing settlements: and the new survey had hardly been begun. "That your Board should not yet have obtained a complete statement of the mehals included in each division with a specification of the terms and conditions of settlement made for each --- is quite unaccountable to Government," wrote Holt Mackenzie to the Board. "The preparation of such a statement is so simple a matter that His Lordship can conceive no excuse for the Assistants not having finished it." The Board pleaded that the Principal Assistants were overworked, and that their varied duties left little time for detailed recording. They even went so far as to declare "that experience has, in the opinion of the Board, completely proved that a

division of the judicial and revenue offices is necessary ----
 as at the present time more is demanded from the gentlemen in
 charge of the Delhi Territory than they can perform." ⁶⁹

As a result of this censure, the Board made a belated effort to obtain the information required; and they issued a circular to the Principal Assistants asking them as a matter of urgency "to furnish an account of the existing settlement" in the parganas of their Divisions. They were to list the names of the villages; and against each they were to record the names of the proprietors, the jama assessed, and the term of the lease. ⁷⁰ They were also to state particulars concerning all estates which had recently been placed under "kham" or direct management by the revenue officers of Government, giving reasons for the adoption of this procedure. As "Kham" management usually resulted in a loss of revenue, the Principal Assistants were asked to record the amount of revenue credited to Government while the villages were held "Kham" and the jama on the same estates at the last revenue settlement. The Principal Assistants did their best to comply; but the Board's authority had come to an end before their accounts were completed; and most of the statistics compiled were sent to ⁷¹ Government during the second residency of Sir Charles Metcalfe.

69. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 20th Jan. 1825. No.60.

70. Ibid. " No.63.

71. Vide infra chapter 7. p.244 et seq

Another evil which became apparent during the Board's administration of the Delhi Territory was the disastrous effect of overassessment of the villages by the revenue officers. The Principal Assistants were not primarily to blame for this; for the evil dated back to the excessive jama demanded five years earlier when much of the Western Division was settled by William Fraser. The official opinion of Government was that the practice common in the Delhi Territory of assessing revenue at a half or at twenty-two fortieths of the value of the crops was too high; and it was suggested that Government's share should be "nearer one third than one half of the gross produce." In the Western Division, where the effects of over-assessment were particularly apparent, there were wholesale emigrations of cultivators; villages being deserted because the ryots could not pay the stipulated revenue. In pargana Rania, for instance, the exodus was so general that Graham, the Principal Assistant, was authorised by the Board of Revenue to revise the existing settlement in favour of the cultivators. The Governor-General in Council not only endorsed the Board's action, but suggested that it should be extended to the other parganas of the Western Division.

Unfortunately, Graham's efforts to restore cultivation to the

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| 72. | Bengal Revenue Consultations. | 21st Feb. 1821. No. 47. |
| 73. | Ibid. | 6th Aug. 1824. No. 52. |
| 74. | Ibid. | 6th Aug. 1824. No. 11. |
| 75. | Ibid. | 17th Sept. 1824. No. 53. |

deserted areas of his district were frustrated by a natural disaster over which he had no control. In the Autumn of 1824, a complete failure of the rains led to the destruction of the kharif crop and seriously affected the spring crop of the following year.⁷⁶ During a tour through the parganas of his division, Graham reported that he had seen nothing that could be called cultivation. "The zamindars have at present nothing but lean cattle to turn into money to pay the revenue," he told Government; and he recommended that at least a quarter of the jama of this area should be completely remitted, and a further quarter temporarily suspended. Both the Governor-General in Council and the Board of Revenue agreed, and gave him discretionary power to adopt any measures he thought necessary to give relief to the destitute population.⁷⁷ The failure of both kharif and rabi crops was so complete in the Western Division that Government eventually cancelled the whole revenue demand for the current year,⁷⁸ and made large-scale remissions elsewhere.

In circumstances such as these, the revenue returns of the Delhi Territory during the years of the Board's administration were bound to show considerable fluctuation. In the year 1823-1824, for instance, the net revenue for the Delhi Territory after deducting all charges amounted to Rs.28,29,073.⁷⁹ In the

76. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 22nd Oct. 1824. No. 47.

77. Ibid. " " No. 49.

78. Ibid. 14th April. 1825. No. 102.

79. Bengal Letters Received. (Rev.) 12th Oct. 1826. para. 15.

following year, as a result of revenue remissions owing to famine, the desertion of villages through over-assessment, and the deficit on customs and say⁸⁰er, the net revenue totalled only Rs.11,49,765 - a loss on the previous year of more than 16 lakhs. To some extent, the situation improved in 1825-1826⁸¹ when the net revenue reached Rs.22,93,410; though in the Western and Rohtuk Divisions, remissions of revenue amounting to more than two lakhs of rupees were still being sanctioned. It was not until 1827 that revenue receipts became normal.

In spite of revenue remissions on a scale hitherto unparalleled, the inhabitants of the areas devastated by famine tended to blame Government for their distress; and in the Western and Rohtuk Divisions, serious disturbances occurred. Unrest and discontent were aggravated by rumours that all British troops had⁸² been withdrawn to the Assam frontier; and for a time, pillage and robbery became general. The two main areas of disturbance were Hariana and Rohtuk. In Hariana, the rebels were led by Suraz Mull, an exiled Rajput nobleman; and for a⁸³ period they succeeded in defying British authority. In Rohtuk, disturbances centred around Beree, where a band of Jats carried off large quantities of cattle and committed savage crimes. The Principal Assistant, W.H.Oldfield, reported that

80. In 1824-1825, the deficit on customs revenue was Rs.6,23,176 Bengal Letters Received. 12th Oct.1826.para 19.

81. Bengal Letters Received. 4th Oct.1827.paras.37 & 38.

82. Ibid. (Political)31st May.1826.para. 74.

83. Ibid. (Judicial.W.P.) 7th Dec.1826.paras.113 & 114.

the spirit of rebellion had risen to such a pitch that the police were powerless to deal with the situation. In their attempts to apprehend robbers and recover stolen property, they " were peremptorily dismissed from every village to which they went." ⁸⁴

To deal with disaffection in both regions, Elliott as Political ⁸⁵ Agent called in military aid. The insurgents under Suraj Mull did not wait to be attacked but fled across the Bikaner frontier. The village of Behadra which had harboured the rebels was burned as a punitive measure; and the sight of a military contingent marching through Hariana had the effect of restoring order without recourse to further reprisals. It was characteristic of the dissensions which existed among the members of the Board of Revenue that the troops sent to Beree at Elliott's request were turned back by Fraser's orders on the ground that military ⁸⁶ intervention was unnecessary. The incident did much to convince the Governor-General in Council that a Board was not the best instrument of government for an area such as the Delhi Territory. The immediate result of Fraser's high-handed action was that Elliott was given the sole charge of all police arrangements; and a large contingent of Skinner's Horse was placed at his disposal for use in the disturbed areas.

This was but one instance of the open friction which existed

84. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 5th Nov. 1824. No. 84.

85. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. W.P.
18th Nov. 1824. Nos. 1 & 2.

86. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 26th Nov. 1824. No. 74.

between the members of the Board of Revenue. Theoretically, the Board functioned as one body and its decisions were the responsibility of all its members; in practice, however, there was usually complete lack of agreement. In the early days of their administration, the Board had decided that they could only deal with their manifold tasks in the Delhi Territory and the Ceded and Conquered Provinces by dividing the work among themselves. By mutual arrangement, they agreed to leave to their Second Member, William Fraser, the superintendence of revenue, police, and certain judicial duties in the Delhi Territory; while the First and Third Members concentrated on administering the Regulations in the Ceded and Conquered Provinces, limiting their functions in the Delhi Territory to holding gaol deliveries and giving decisions in the court of appeal.⁸⁷ This division of labour took William Fraser out of Delhi into the Mofusil for long periods, an arrangement mutually convenient to all members of the Board; but it did not prevent Elliott and Ewer countermanding Fraser's orders to the Principal Assistants on revenue and police affairs whenever they disagreed with them.⁸⁸ Elliott reckoned that his political work as Agent occupied at least three hours of each day;⁸⁹ and as he usually presided in the civil court of appeal at Delhi, it fell to the two junior members of the Board to hold the criminal sessions and deal with gaol deliveries.

87. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 17th Jan. 1824. No. 65.

88. Ibid. 19th Dec. 1823. Nos. 44 & 45.

89. Ibid. 5th June. 1823. No. 56.

When the Board of Revenue assumed control of the administration of the Delhi Territory in 1822, no immediate change was made in the judicial system. It is true that the Board was asked to bear in mind the possibility of assimilating the judicial procedure of the Delhi Territory to that of the Regulation Provinces;⁹⁰ but for the time being, the system as it had worked under Fortescue was to remain intact. The Board thus assumed all the judicial functions previously vested in the Commissioner; with the difference that final decisions were in the hands of three persons instead of one. To meet the possibility of a difference of opinion, Government agreed that one member of the Board should be competent to give decisions on ordinary civil suits in the court of appeal; but that in difficult or very important cases, a second member's opinion should be obtained. In the event of the two members disagreeing, the⁹¹ third member of the Board was to have the casting vote.

Criminal justice was dispensed mainly by the two junior members of the Board, Fraser and Ewer. It was laid down that they should make gaol deliveries every three months, and undertake a circuit of all stations at least once a year. As criminal judges, their power extended to every degree of punishment short of death. In capital cases only, was reference to the Board's⁹² collective judgment necessary.

90. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 25th Sept. 1823. No. 32.

91. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 15th Mar. 1822. No. 48.

92. Bengal Letters Received. (Judicial.W.P.)
10th April. 1823. paras. 78 - 89.

It was Walter Ewer's strong reaction against the procedure he found operating in the criminal courts, and to a lesser degree in the civil courts, which brought the judicial administration of the Delhi Territory under criticism in 1823. After his first session as criminal judge during the latter part of 1822, he launched an attack upon the Delhi System of criminal and civil justice declaring that it demanded "the serious consideration of Government."⁹³ He particularly disliked the lack of precision in both procedure and judgments which the system of collective responsibility for stolen property entailed; and he criticised severely Metcalfe's ruling that sentences on prisoners attempting to escape from gaol should be doubled. "We have seen two cases in which the original term of imprisonment was seven years, but doubled in geometrical proportion as far as fifty-six," he reported; and he added that he had found "several persons suspected only of being concerned in an affray --- put in irons by order of an Assistant and sent back to their villages to remain for an indefinite time." Ewer also complained about the irregularity of gaol deliveries. "Nothing is more common than a detention of two or even three years in gaol pending an enquiry" he wrote; and he deplored the fact that many such sentences had been passed by young Assistants who had never before sat in a court of justice. To one versed in the precise formularies and judgments of the nizamat adalat, such a system seemed not only irregular but harmful. Ewer's remarks about

procedure in the civil courts were less trenchant; but he thought that in both civil and criminal cases, evidence was⁹⁴ imperfectly and unsatisfactorily recorded."

Such an indictment could not be ignored by the judicial department of Government, and both Charles Metcalfe and William Fraser were asked to comment on the charges made. Fraser, an ardent supporter of the existing system in Delhi, upheld the authority of the Assistant to pass judgment on crimes committed in his area; and declared with his customary emphasis that the best means of improving the judicial system of the Delhi Territory was not to supplant it by introducing the judicial procedure of the Regulation Provinces, but to set up a system of trial by jury, and "do away with the revolting custom of yoking our practice to the degrading trammels of Muhamadan Law."⁹⁵ Metcalfe was seriously perturbed by Ewer's challenge. "It is with considerable concern that I find myself put on the defensive with regard to the system under which the Delhi Territory was governed during my Residency," he wrote from⁹⁶ Hyderabad; and he defended the excessive sentences passed during his régime, on the grounds that in a primitive community only partially accustomed to law and order, prevalent crimes such as prison-breaking and the receiving of stolen property needed to be checked by making severe examples. He denied

94. Bengal Letters Received. (Judicial.W.P.)

26th July. 1826. para.24.

95. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 17th Jan.1824.No.65.

96. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations.25th Sept.1823.No.28.

that people were detained indefinitely as sureties. "I am confidently of the opinion," he stated, "that generally trial and sentence followed on apprehension in the Delhi courts as speedily as in any court in the world." With regard to the lack of written evidence at trials, Metcalfe maintained that "it was not practicable to take down the testimony of witnesses at length in written depositions;" ⁹⁷ and he asserted his belief that only a person acquainted with the conditions under which such a system of judicature had been built up could judge adequately of its merits. "I cannot acknowledge my responsibility for present irregularities," he concluded. "Years have elapsed since my departure."

It was obvious that some official ruling had to be made with regard to the future conduct of judicial business in the Delhi Territory. The Governor-General in Council found Metcalfe's reply not altogether convincing; and while he acknowledged "the extraordinary success" of Metcalfe's administration at Delhi, he condemned some of Metcalfe's prison sentences as being disproportionately severe; and stated his opinion that in important criminal trials, a brief summary of the evidence should have been recorded. There was, however, no vital change made in the existing system of judicial procedure; but Government hoped to avoid the chief evils of which Ewer had complained by exercising closer

supervision over the Principal Assistants and also over the member of the Board who was acting as criminal judge. In future Principal Assistants were to furnish regular quarterly reports of all sentences passed on prisoners; and the judge was likewise to make a detailed report to Government on all gaol deliveries. To prevent "the informal, careless, and inefficient dispensation of justice by inexperienced Assistants, such as had occurred after Fortescue's departure, Government proposed in future to appoint as Principal Assistants only those men who had had considerable experience in the working of the judicial system of the Regulation Provinces: and with the object of making the closer supervision of Principal Assistants by the Board a practicable proposition, a fourth member of the Board was appointed in the person of Henry Batson. These measures, coupled with administrative changes such as the subdivision of the large Northern District where crime was more prevalent than elsewhere, and the appointment of Thomas Metcalfe to the exclusive charge of the Delhi courts, did something towards regularising and improving the judicial system of the Delhi Territory.

It was to the credit of the Board of Revenue that during the period of its administration the first mental asylum was erected in Delhi. Middleton had first suggested in 1821 that

98. Bengal Letters Received. (Judicial W.P.) 26th July. 1826. para 24 and 12th July 1827 para 28.

99. Vide supra p. 196 + p 207.

Delhi, like every other great Indian city, should be able to house its lunatic population in an institution adapted to their needs. The idea was taken up by the Board of Revenue; and "an insane hospital" was built for 123 lunatics who hitherto had been confined with the felons in the Delhi gaol.¹⁰⁰ This progressive measure was off-set by the retrograde step, denounced by William Fraser, of re-introducing capital punishment into the Delhi Territory. In 1823, a Jat peasant was condemned and executed for murdering a merchant who was his creditor,¹⁰¹ - the first instance of a capital sentence in the Delhi Territory since the British took possession.

While acknowledging that "various improvements were unquestionably introduced" during the Board's administration of the Delhi Territory,¹⁰² the main impression both of the Government in Calcutta and the Court of Directors was that the members of the Board of Revenue spent their time in criticising rather than in improving the administration for which they were responsible; and, moreover, that their criticism was discordant. It was the deliberate opinion of the Governor-General in Council¹⁰³ that "much mischief was done by these conflicting opinions;" and he sharply rebuked the Board for sending in separate minutes

- 100. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 8th Jan. 1824. No. 14.
- 101. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 17th Jan. 1823. No. 65
- 102. Bengal Letters Received. 1st Oct. 1825. para 86.
- 103. Ibid. 12th July. 1827. para 57.

instead of agreed recommendations. The Board was informed that such communications were "disrespectful towards Government and discreditable to the Board --- It is the expectation of His Lordship in Council that you should meet together, that you should freely discuss all points on which a difference of opinion may exist --- and that you should lay before Government the result of your deliberations in a connected and well-digested shape," they were told.¹⁰⁴ Constituted as it was, however, the Board of Revenue was incapable of such unanimity; and the Supreme Government itself did not escape the censure of the Directors who criticised them for not recognising the fact.

In fairness to the Board it should be stated that from the first they had realised that they had been given a task beyond their capacity; and in the early days of their administration Elliott and Ewer had pointed this out. "While so serious a responsibility attaches to members of the Board" wrote Elliott¹⁰⁵ in 1823, it appears imperative not to conceal from Government the extent of our ability to perform the duty allotted to us; and every day's experience tends more and more to convince me, that constituted as the Board now is, much must be left undone." At one time, Elliott thought that a possible solution was the introduction of the whole Regulation Code into the

104. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 23rd July. 1824. No. 33

105. Ibid. 5th June. 1823. No. 56.

Delhi Territory, and the transference of the civil and criminal jurisdiction to the Bareilly court in the Ceded and Conquered Provinces. After a few month's sojourn in Delhi, however, he was convinced that such a course would be unwise at that juncture; and he recommended that civil and political power should be reunited in the hands of a single officer responsible for the Delhi Territory alone. Ewer agreed¹⁰⁶ that the affairs of Delhi required the undivided attention of one officer,"¹⁰⁶ but saw no reason for delaying the introduction of the Regulations.¹⁰⁷ The Governor-General in Council set aside both suggestions;¹⁰⁷ and left the Board to grapple as best it could with its complex and difficult task. To this extent, Government itself was responsible for the mismanagement, dissension, and general lack of progress which characterised the years of the Board's administration; and merited the censure of the Directors who blamed them for "allowing men of such divergent views and temper to continue to work together as a Board when it was obvious that¹⁰⁸ they could not agree on the essential principles of administration."¹⁰⁸

General dissatisfaction with the administration of the Delhi Territory finally drove the Governor-General in Council to acknowledge that a Board was not a suitable medium for governing the Delhi Territory; and that it "was preferable to place the superior controlling authority --- in the hands of a single

106. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 5th June. 1823. No. 57.

107. Ibid. " No. 58.

108. Bengal Despatches (Rev.W.P.) 22nd Dec. 1830.

officer."¹⁰⁹ This was effected by the appointment of Sir Charles Metcalfe as Resident and Commissioner; and in 1825¹¹⁰ he superseded the Board as the supreme authority in Delhi. Several factors conspired to bring about this decision. The method of governing the Bengal Provinces by three revenue boards, of which the Board of Revenue for the Western Provinces was one, had not proved satisfactory; and a general reorganisa-¹¹¹ tion was pending throughout Bengal. The question of re-constituting a separate government for the Delhi Territory under a single officer was also influenced by a readjustment of political jurisdictions in Rajputana. Dislike of the way in which Ochterlony interpreted Government policy in Malwa and Rajputana caused the Governor-General in Council to decide that¹¹² his Residency should be placed in other hands; and both factors pointed to the Residency of Rajputana and the Commissionership of Delhi being re-united in the hands of¹¹³ Metcalfe.

Thus in 1825, an unfortunate experiment was brought to an end. It was generally acknowledged that whatever solution the future might hold for the better government of the Delhi Territory, administration under a board had proved a failure.

- 109. Bengal Letters Received (Political) 1st Oct. 1825. para 80.
- 110. Ibid. 12th July. 1827. " 60.
- 111. Foster. W. "A Guide to the India Office Records" pp. 56-57.
- 112. Vide infra chapter 7. p. 230.
- 113. Bengal Letters Received 1st Oct. 1825. paras. 84-85.

Yet one important fact had emerged during the years of the Board's tenure of office, namely that the Delhi system of government could not easily be merged into the general system of the Regulation Provinces. The impact of administrators versed in the precise detail and procedure of the Regulation Code had thrown into relief the faults and anomalies inherent in such an individualistic system as that of Delhi; and by placing the government of Delhi once more in the strong hands of Sir Charles Metcalfe, Government hoped not only that these defects would be remedied, but that the evil effects of lax supervision and divided authority would be overcome.

Chapter 7.

The Second Residency of Sir Charles Metcalfe. 1825-1827.

Metcalfe's second term of office at Delhi was destined to be of short duration: yet in the twenty months which elapsed between his appointment as Resident in 1825 and his promotion to the Governor General's Council in 1827, he governed the Delhi Territory with a firmness unknown to his predecessors, making Delhi once again the diplomatic centre from which Government exerted control over the troubled states of Rajputana and Hindustan.

When Lord Amherst raised the question of Metcalfe's return to Delhi in 1825,¹ he indicated his intention of re-uniting the civil and political functions of government at Delhi in the hands of a single officer. He proposed that the authority of the Board of Revenue in the Delhi Territory should cease on the Resident's arrival; asserting that "the maintenance of a separate and clashing authority" would be incompatible "with the dignity of Sir Charles Metcalfe's office or with his own personal feelings."² The Governor-General also suggested that Metcalfe might find it convenient to employ a deputy

1. Private letter from Amherst to Metcalfe dated 16th April 1825 Quoted by Kaye in "Life & Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe." vol.2. p.113
2. Bengal Letters Received. 1st October.1825 para 86.

commissioner to supervise the Principal Assistants and deal
 with the details of civil administration.³ Metcalfe, however,
 preferred to deal directly with his subordinate officers;
 and aided by his secretary Richard Wells and his two extra-
 assistants Captain Sutherland and Lieutenant Hislop, he
 executed both his civil and political duties without the aid
 of a deputy.⁴

The need for a unified control in civil administration at
 Delhi was great; but the main reason for Metcalfe's re-
 appointment was the urgency of the political situation in
 Rajputana. Since 1821, Ochterlony had been in charge of the
 affairs of Malwa and Rajputana; but his interpretation of
 Government policy had proved so unsatisfactory that the
 Governor-General decided on his removal and the reorganisation
 of his political duties. Malwa affairs were separated and
 placed under the superintendence of the Resident at Indore;
 and Metcalfe was appointed to Delhi in order that he might
 restore "confidence and submission to authority in Rajputana."⁵
 Any scruples that Metcalfe may have had at dispossessing an old
 friend of his post were removed by the news of Ochterlony's
 death on the 5th July 1825:⁶ and Metcalfe took up his

3. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 6th Oct. 1825. No. 18.

4. Bengal Political Consultations. 11th Nov. 1825. No. 4

5. Bengal Letters Received. 1st Oct. 1825. para. 85.

6. Vide E. Thompson. "Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe" pp 242-
 243; & W. Kaye's "Life & Correspondence" vol. 2. p. 131.

appointment as "Resident and Commissioner at Delhi and Agent to the Governor-General for the affairs of Rajputana " on 22nd October 1825.⁷ The Governor-General hoped that his appointment would do much to rectify "the undoubted error " which had been made when the affairs of Rajputana were taken out of the hands of the Resident at Delhi.

In these circumstances, the political situation in Rajputana had first claim on Metcalfe's attention. His immediate task was to restore order in the states of Bharatpur, Alwar, and Jaipur, where civil strife threatened not only to disrupt the states themselves but to spread disorder into neighbouring territories. Ochterlony had resigned because Government had censured his handling of the situation in Bharatpur and Alwar. Both states were threatened by civil war on account of disputed successions to the throne; and in Bharatpur, the situation was critical. By recognising and investing the young Raja Balwant Singh and by bringing up British troops to support his claims against his usurping uncle Darjan Sal, the Governor-General in Council considered that Ochterlony had exceeded his authority and had acted precipitately.⁸ His recognition of Beni Singh as the rightful Raja of Alwar was likewise criticised as premature.⁹ In Jaipur, there was no disputed succession: but chronic discord between the mother of the young raja and the thakars had brought the state to the verge of

7. Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations. 22nd Oct. 1825. No. 2

8. Thornton. "History of the British Empire in India. vol. 5. 120-133

9. Bengal Despatches - 16th April. 1828. para. 8.

disruption. Metcalfe was commissioned to achieve a settlement in these three states by force of arms, if need be; and¹⁰ Bharatpur was to be his first objective.

To some extent, Ochterlony had been made the scapegoat of the Government's indecision.¹¹ Aware that a policy of positive intervention in the internal dissensions of Bharatpur and the Rajput states would meet with the disapproval of the authorities in England, the Governor-General had hesitated to issue positive orders to Ochterlony; yet when he acted on his own initiative, he had been reprimanded for precipitate and unauthorised action. Ochterlony's death and the rapid deterioration of the situation in Bharatpur, Alwar, and Jaipur which ensued, forced Lord Amherst's government to face the implications underlying the system of subordinate alliances concluded in 1818. They had to decide whether or not Government's position as the paramount authority in central India necessitated its open intervention in these distracted principalities in order to secure a modicum of stability. They laid the whole question before Metcalfe when he visited the Presidency on his way from Hyderabad to Delhi; and as a result of the memorandum he submitted, the¹² Governor-General passed a Resolution on 16th September 1825 in which he declared it to be the solemn duty of Government

10. Bengal Letters Received 1st Oct. 1825. paras 88-94.

11. Vide E. Thompson. op.cit. p 243.

12. Quoted by Kaye in "Life & Correspondence." vol2. p.144.

"no less than their right as the paramount and protecting power --- to intervene". Ten years earlier, Metcalfe had pleaded that Government should assume the obligations of a protecting power in Rajputana. He now had the satisfaction of seeing his counsels prevail, and himself appointed the instrument whereby the Government's decision should be implemented. Thus in 1825 was formulated the principle, which had always been implicit though never before openly acknowledged, that if the internal dissensions of a subordinate state were such as to destroy its own stability and threaten the peace of its neighbours, Government as the paramount power had the right and the obligation to intervene to restore order.

Metcalfe had no hesitation in advising Government to intervene in Bharatpur. Situated on the southern frontier of the Delhi Territory and Agra, its rulers had for twenty years fomented intrigue and conspiracy against British rule. During his first Residency, Metcalfe had borne with the contumacy of Raja Randhir Singh whose attitude had varied between sullen acquiescence in British demands and open defiance. His death in 1823, followed within a few months by that of his brother Baldeo Singh, left Bharatpur and the young Raja Balwant Singh a prey to the intrigues of Darjan Sal and his brother Mahdu Singh.¹³ It was Metcalfe's task to restore Balwant Singh to his throne and create a stable government in Bharatpur by ridding the state of both usurpers.

13. Aitcheson.C.U. "A Collection of Treaties Engagements and Sanads." p.342.

He broke his journey to Delhi in order to discuss the Bharatpur situation with his colleague Charles Mac Sween at Agra, where he also met the vakils of Darjan Sal and Mahdu Singh.¹⁴ He found both brothers averse to Government's demands; and in consequence, he determined to use the authority expressly delegated to him by the Governor-General to enforce submission. He asked the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Combermere, to march against Bharatpur: and ordered the town and fort to be "levelled and its ditch filled up".¹⁵ This was accomplished by British troops on 18th January 1826 and was witnessed by Metcalfe. From his camp nearby he reported "the glorious and complete success achieved" which included the capture of Darjan Sal and his brother and the surrender of Dig and the other fortresses of Bharatpur.¹⁶ "The state is smashed to pieces," his despatch concluded, "and its reorganisation will be a work of uncertain result." Metcalfe's elation was pardonable. He felt that British prestige, which had suffered a severe blow in 1805 when British troops had failed to storm the citadel of Bharatpur, was at last vindicated: but significantly, even in the moment of victory, he realised that it would be no easy matter to establish a stable government in Bharatpur.

14. Bengal Political Consultations. 11th Nov. 1825. No. 5

15. Ibid. 2nd Dec. 1825. No. 2

16. Ibid. 10th Feb. 1826. No. 11

Raja Balwant Singh, whose authority had been so dramatically restored, was a child of six; and it was obvious that in the critical years of his minority, a council of regency would be necessary to govern the state. The Governor-General in Council rejected the possibility of placing Bharatpur under direct British rule, and adopted Metcalfe's alternative plan of a council of native ministers with the Raja's mother, Imrat Kunwan, as Regent.¹⁷

It was a fundamental principle of Government policy that there should be a minimum of interference in the internal affairs of native states; and Metcalfe had some difficulty in persuading Amherst of the need both for a resident political officer to advise the Bharatpur ministers and for British troops to remain to enforce order. Early in 1826, however, the Governor-General gave a reluctant consent to the appointment of Major Lockett as Political Agent in Bharatpur;¹⁸ and had his efforts not been frustrated by the hostility of the Regent Rani to her ministers, the work of reconstruction would have proceeded apace. As it was, the Bharatpur administration was almost completely wrecked by the influence of Jani Byjnalt, the Regent's favourite; and once again direct British intervention was necessary. Imrat Kunwan was set aside from the office of Regent and obliged to limit her activities to the domestic concerns of the palace; while the young Raja was placed

17. Bengal Political Consultations. 7th July. 1826. No. 24.

18. Ibid. 14th April. 1826. No. 7

under the care of a British tutor and the native ministers authorised to govern in his name. The scheme worked well: and by the end of 1826, the native ministry was sufficiently stable for most of the British troops in Bharatpur to be withdrawn.¹⁹ Metcalfe, by whose advice this policy had been initiated and carried into effect, succeeded in convincing the Governor-General in Council that Lockett's presence in Bharatpur would be needed for an indefinite period;²⁰ and his appointment was accordingly confirmed. Under the direction of the Resident at Delhi, he did much in the ensuing years to reorganise the resources of the Bharatpur state.

Events in Bharatpur may have provided a salutary warning to Raja Beni Singh of Alwar; for Metcalfe succeeded in introducing a measure of stability in this state without recourse to force by inducing the Raja to set aside certain parganas as a provision for the rival claimant to the throne.²¹ In Jaipur, the situation was more intricate. Here, as in Bharatpur, the Raja was a minor; and the Regent Rani, under the influence of a favourite, had usurped complete authority by refusing to allow the thakars to exercise their hereditary right of meeting to settle affairs of state. Metcalfe felt strongly that should these Jaipur nobles meet in defiance of the Rani's orders, they should be guaranteed British protection. As a result, the Governor-

19. Bengal Political Consultations. 30th Dec. 1826. No. 17.

20. Bengal Letters Received. 27th July. 1826. paras. 3-19.

21. Ibid. " " paras. 32-35.

General decided that " the guaranteed thakars", as they became known, should meet under the protection of the paramount power; and that he would uphold their decisions even to the extent of superseding the Regent Rani's authority.

Thus far did Metcalfe achieve his object in Jaipur; though after his departure from Delhi, Government's policy towards Jaipur took a different course. What stands out in the records of Metcalfe's handling of affairs in Jaipur, Alwar, and Bharatpur, is the reliance placed upon his judgment and diplomatic ability by Government, and the degree of intervention in the internal affairs of subordinate states which they were prepared to sanction on his advice. To set up stable administrations in these three states within a short period of eighteen months was well-nigh impossible; but Metcalfe did succeed in reducing chaos and civil strife, and he instituted a more settled form of native government with the minimum amount of outside interference.

This was Metcalfe's immediate task after he assumed the office of Resident; but he also found time in the winter of 1826 to tour the Rajput states under his superintendence that he might gain first-hand knowledge of their problems. In one other state, that of Udiapur, did he counsel " active interference" by the Governor-General in Council. Here, the weakness of the Maharaja's rule and the frequent incursions of the Bhil and Grassia tribes into his territory had already caused

22. Bengal Political Consultations. 13th Oct. 1826. No. 14.

23. Ibid. 24th Nov. 1826. No. 13.

24. Vide infra chapter 8. pp. 282-3

the British Government to intervene. In 1823, they took under direct British management a large area of the Maharaja's territory in order that there might be some chance of Udi^{ai}apur²⁵ paying its tributary obligation. A further extensive insurrection of the hill tribes of Mewar in 1826 caused the Governor-General to authorise Metcalfe to employ British troops to subdue them. Operations against the Bhils did not take place until Metcalfe had quitted Delhi; but he was mainly responsible for the plan whereby the Bhil and Grassia lands were to be taken under British control for a period of years and eventually²⁶ restored to Udi^{ai}apur and the Maharaja's rule.

It was during his tour of Rajputana that Metcalfe decided that it was his "imperative duty" to speak his mind on the Government's opium policy in Malwa which he considered an instance of unjust interference on the part of the paramount power. It needed considerable courage to attack the Government's opium monopoly, for Metcalfe was aware that opinion in high places was against him. Nevertheless, he spoke out in no uncertain terms. "In 1817 to 1818 --- we formed alliances with²⁷ the states of Malwa and Rajputana," he wrote. "We have now made use of our power and influence to establish, solely for our own pecuniary benefit, a monopoly which brings disgrace on our reputation, and is possibly more extensively injurious than any

25. Bengal Political Consultations. 6th March. 1827. No. 5.

26. Ibid. 1st June 1827. No. 104 and

Vide infra chapter 8. pp. 286-7

27. Bengal Political Consultations. 9th Feb. 1827. No. 10.

act of interference ever before committed by any government in the internal affairs of foreign states." The question became acute when the Raj Rana of Kotah asked Metcalfe to procure his release from the opium concessions made to the British in 1818;²⁸ and though Metcalfe was not immediately successful, his expostulations bore fruit in later years when²⁹ the Government's opium policy was reversed.

One other important aspect of Metcalfe's political work during his short second residency concerned the King of Delhi. Ross's letter of 25th February 1823³⁰ had been referred to Metcalfe for his consideration; but before he reported his opinion to Government, the Governor-General visited Delhi on his tour of the Upper Provinces and met the King. Amherst's more cordial attitude and Akbar's desire to press his claims in person made a meeting between the Governor-General and the King of Delhi possible. It was the only time during the course of Akbar's long reign that this oft-mooted proposal was carried into effect. By consenting to forego the presentation of a formal nazr by Amherst, Akbar tacitly acknowledged that the relationship of sovereign and vassal had ceased to exist even in name between himself and the representative of the British Government;³¹ and Metcalfe,

28. Bengal Political Consultations. 1st June 1827. No. 100.

29. Vide infra chapter 8.

30. Vide supra chapter 6. p.p. 190-3.

31. Bengal Letters Received. 3rd July. 1828. paras. 60-63.

who was responsible for arranging the details of the Governor-General's meeting with the King, saw to it that this concession was given outward expression. The ceremony took place in the Diwan-i-Khas on 17th February 1827 in the presence of a great assemblage of English and Indian notables.³² " The King came into the Hall of Audience --- at the same moment that the Governor-General entered on the opposite side; and, meeting his Lordship in front of the throne, embraced and welcomed him in the most cordial manner" reported the Persian Secretary in attendance on Amherst.³³ He went on to describe how Akbar then ascended the Peacock Throne and the Governor-General took his seat in a state chair set at right-angles to it. Akbar and Amherst alone were seated; " the Resident and other officers present, as well as the chief personages of the court, all standing. "

A week later, the King returned the visit and paid his compliments to Amherst at the Residency. Akbar hoped that by consenting to receive the Governor-General on terms of equality, he might more easily be able to obtain the demands on which his mind was set; and before Amherst left Delhi, the King presented " A Paper of Requests " in which he set forth his claims in a series of "articles". These centred round the King's claim

32. Delhi Residency & Agency Records. pp. 336-342: also Spear "Twilight of the Mughals p. 46. and "The Calcutta Monthly Journal" - March 1827.

33. Bengal Secret and Political Consultations. - Stirling to Swinton. 23rd March. 1827. Nos. 11 - 13.

that his stipend should be increased until it was equal in value to the net revenue of the Delhi Territory: and this, he contended, had been promised to Shah Alam by Lord Wellesley in 1805.³⁴ Metcalfe was asked to consider the King's claims thus set out, together with Ross' letter of 25th February 1823, and report to Government: and it was upon his considered opinion³⁵ that Amherst based his answer to Akbar.

Metcalfe, whose knowledge of Akbar and the royal family of Delhi dated back to 1806, was exceptionally qualified to advise the Governor-General in Council on this issue: and he analysed the King's claims in a despatch dated 26th June 1827.³⁶ As the opinions expressed in this document were instrumental in precipitating Akbar's appeal to England, Metcalfe's conclusions warrant examination. He thought it strange that Akbar's claim to an increased stipend should be presented in this new guise. "Although the King has often applied for an increase of stipend," wrote Metcalfe, "there is nothing on record heretofore within my knowledge indicative of his desire to have his stipend regulated by the amount of revenue produced in the Delhi Territory. " This claim, the justice of which had been upheld by Ross, was derived from the written document given to Shah Alam by Ochterlony when he acted on the "Notes of Instruction to the Resident"³⁷ sent to him by Lord Wellesley in 1805.

34. Vide supra chapter 6 p.192.

35. Bengal Letters Received. 3rd July.1828.para.74.

36. Bengal Political Consultations.27th July.1827.No.7.

37. Vide supra chapters 2 & 6.

Metcalfe admitted that this document was not consistent with the final instructions on which the actual settlement with Shah Alam was based; but he argued that the "Notes of Instruction to the Resident" were "intimations of the intentions of the British Government at that time and not an engagement positively binding on its future conduct." The other point at issue was the extent of the "assigned lands" set apart for the support of the royal family of Delhi. Lord Wellesley had specified the lands west of the Jumna lying north-west of the village of Kabulpur; but the greater part of this area had been alienated from British control by Barlow's government in 1806 and given as jagirs to independent chiefs. All that remained was a strip of territory some twenty miles wide along the Jumna consisting of "the city of Delhi and the parganas of Haveli Palum, Sonipat, Panipat, and Gunour." The net revenue from these lands was by no means sufficient for the needs of the royal family; for even under the improved settlements of British revenue officers, it was producing little more than nine lakhs of rupees -- less than Akbar had been drawing as a stipend for many years. Thus, concluded Metcalfe, the King's claim in its new form bore no real relationship to the situation as it had existed in the early years of his reign; and he characterised the document on which these claims were based as "null and void for every purpose but that of providing His Majesty with a liberal stipend."

Metcalf also maintained that the principles regarding the King's stipend had been finally determined by Lord Minto's Government in June 1809; and unlike Ross, he saw no reason to question their validity because they did not "agree with the seeming intention of a prior period." He did suggest, however, that if the net revenue of the Delhi Territory as constituted in 1827 should permit, the King's personal stipend could with advantage be raised to twelve lakhs of rupees per annum. Metcalfe thus brushed aside Akbar's claim to the entire revenues of the Delhi Territory which, by 1827, included many of the lands alienated by Barlow in 1806. Since 1809, "the Delhi Territory has increased by many acquisitions," he concluded. "It surely cannot be said with justice that (the King) is entitled to the benefits of such acquisitions." This unfavourable report on Akbar's latest pretensions was written within a few weeks of Metcalfe's departure from Delhi; and it fell to his successor to communicate the unwelcome news to the King that his claims had evoked little response from the Governor-General.

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Though chiefly occupied in dealing with the urgent political Questions which claimed his attention as Resident, Metcalfe by no means neglected his civil duties as

38. Vide infra chapter 8

Commissioner. In 1825, he returned to an administration different in many respects from the one he had left in 1818; and even had he wished to do so, Metcalfe would have found it impossible to restore the Delhi system as he had known it. Powers delegated to the Principal Assistants could not be re-absorbed; the Delhi Customs system was defunct; and the impact of men experienced in the traditions and practice of the Regulation Provinces had left its mark on methods of administration and standards of efficiency. Metcalfe was too wise an administrator to attempt "to put back the clock:" but he did succeed in re-establishing a strong control from the centre and in completing some of the work left undone by the Board of Revenue.

The outstanding task awaiting him was the completion of the revenue survey of the Delhi Territory required by Regulation VII of 1822; and on Metcalfe's appointment, the Governor-General made special mention of the urgency of this matter. The object of this survey was to supply Government with accurate information as to the extent, nature, and value of the lands in the Western Provinces and the rights in the soil possessed by individual cultivators. The project teemed with difficulties; for it ran counter to the system of communal ownership by the

39. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 1st Sept. 1825. No. 32 Governor-General's Resolution.
40. Bengal Despatches (Rev) 15th Feb. 1833.

village which was practically universal in the Delhi Territory; and it seemed to entail a complete re-measuring and re-assessment of almost every holding. Metcalfe thought that much unnecessary⁴¹ labour could be avoided by using the existing patwari accounts which, though varying both in fullness and reliability according to the district, would supply much of the information⁴² needed by Government. The Governor-General in Council, however, considered these records to be deficient in two important respects: they contained no mention of the varying types of soil within the village or the kind of crops grown; and often there was no mention of individual holdings or the amount of "jumma" for which each villager was responsible. Nevertheless, Metcalfe thought that they should be used whenever possible; and he began the work of the survey by calling upon his Principal Assistants to send him full details of existing settlements, using either their own recent assessments or any reliable patwari accounts. Where no such records were available, the land was to be measured afresh and a new assessment made and reported.

41. These village accounts were usually recorded under the following headings:-

Name.

Rate per bigah and amount of revenue payable by the individual.

Number of hearths. Rate per hearth and amount payable thereon.

Rate of Poll tax. Number of males and amount payable thereon.

Number of cattle and amount of tax.

Quantity of land.

(Bengal Revenue Consultations. 11th Aug. 1826. No. 68.)

42.

Ibid.

No. 70.

Government agreed to accept statistics based upon existing records provided the revenue officers vouched for their reliability; but it also insisted that all future settlements should record " the village rent-roll" under individual names giving details of the amount of revenue due from each parcel of land. The existing customary settlement in the Delhi Territory, whereby ^{the} maqaddam on behalf of the whole village engaged with the revenue officer for the value of the crop and shares were then apportioned at the village panchayet, did not readily lend itself to this form of recording; and with some revenue officers, the more detailed records required by Government were bound to lead to separate revenue engagements being made directly with individual holders. When Metcalfe found that assamwari settlements such as these were being introduced into the Rohtuk division by its Principal Assistant, G.R.Campbell, he reported the matter to the Governor-General in Council and asked for a ruling on the subject. ⁴³ " I am not an advocate for a personal settlement with each individual cultivator in a village," he wrote.

" I conceive that the internal village management may be safely entrusted to the community itself which forms a little republic; and I apprehend that the interference of government officers in the internal details will subvert the village

constitution and sever the links by which the community is bound together and cause its dissolution."

Metcalfe's views on this matter were not shared by the
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 Directors in England who, influenced by Ewer's criticism that the village headmen of the Delhi Territory extorted " a hideous rack-rent" from the less important members of the community, endorsed the Government's request for records of individual
 45
 settlements; Metcalfe was convinced that Ewer's statements were grossly exaggerated; and he believed that the best protection any cultivator could have, lay in the immemorial custom of his village by which his share in the soil and its produce was determined. Metcalfe felt that this was the basis upon which the whole structure of village life was built; and so strongly did he believe in a villager's hereditary right in the land he cultivated, that even when a ryot deserted his holding, Metcalfe thought it wrong to confiscate his land. Provided adequate compensation was given to the temporary

44. Bengal Despatches (Rev.W.P.) 22nd Dec.1830.paras.14 - 18.

45. As a result of pressure from the Court of Directors, the question of introducing individual settlements into the Delhi Territory was raised with the Resident in 1832, but Martin strongly upheld Metcalfe's view. He stated that in the few districts where assamwari settlements had been made, they had not proved a success; mainly because the Government's demand in the Delhi Territory was so high that revenue was only realised as a result of the mutual help afforded to one another by members of the village community. This, he concluded, would cease to operate if individual settlements became general. Martin also thought that the election of muqaddams by the village was an adequate safeguard against any tendency to oppression on their part.

(Bengal Revenue Consultations. 27th March.1832.No.32.)

occupant, Metcalfe thought that " it would be contrary to the general sense of right entertained throughout the country" to ⁴⁶ preclude an absent landholder from re-entering on his land.

Within the frame-work of this system, the ryots had no greater champion than Metcalfe. He advocated long settlements so that the cultivator should reap the benefit of his improve-⁴⁷ments; and he successfully combatted the tendency of revenue officers to demand a heavier revenue than the soil could bear. In some of the less fertile areas of the Delhi Territory, Metcalfe thought that the Government demand should be as little as one quarter; and never, in any part, more than a third. On this issue, he crossed swords with William Fraser, many of whose settlements in the Rohtuk area he revised. "The difference between the system you follow and that which I ⁴⁸would like to see established," he wrote to Fraser, " appears to me to be this: you insist on the full share of the Government and make that your principal if not your sole object. I think that the established share of the Government is too much, and that it ought never to be rigidly exacted." Metcalfe reacted so sharply against the evils consequent upon over-⁴⁹assessment. that he announced his intention of revising the

46. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 16th Nov. 1826. No. 60.

47. Ibid. " " No. 59.

48. Private Letter Quoted by Kaye in "Selections from the papers of Charles, Lord Metcalfe." p. 48.

49. For instance, he persuaded R.G. Campbell to revise his increased assessments of the Kotwal villages in Rohtuk (Bengal Revenue Consultations. 22nd Feb. 1827. No. 6) and he secured a reduction of the assessment on thirteen villages in the Sirsa area. (Bengal Revenue Consultations. 19th Oct. 1826. Nos. 97 & 98.)

settlements of any villages which he considered to be over-
 50
 assessed; for he was convinced that only under a reasonable
 settlement would villages remain cultivated and prosperous, and
 the evils attendant upon " Kham " management be avoided.

Generally speaking, Government was willing to accept Metcalfe's
 views on revenue assessment provided that future records
 contained the information required. For the time being, there-
 fore, no change was made in the existing revenue practice of the
 Delhi Territory; and the muqaddams continued to engage with
 the revenue officers on behalf of the whole village. To this
 extent, Metcalfe succeeded in delaying the introduction of
 practices from the Regulation Provinces which he believed to be
 disruptive of the indigenous village life of the people he
 governed. During his Residency at Delhi and while he was a
 member of the Supreme Council at Calcutta, his influence was
 strong enough to keep such forces at bay and to enable the
 village communities of the Delhi Territory to maintain their
 51
 distinctive system of communal ownership of the soil.

50. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 13th July. 1826. No. 71.

51. Metcalfe's opinion on this important issue was endorsed
 by members of the Sadr Board of Revenue at Allahabad and
 Calcutta. Their opposition to Regulation IX of 1833,
 which authorised the sale of " coparcenary estates " for
 arrears of revenue, was so strong that Bentinck cancelled
 the Regulation.

(Bengal Revenue Consultations. 28th Jan. 1834. Nos. 19. 21. 30.)
 Vide also Spear, P. " Twilight of the Mughuls. " pp. 101-3.

The extensive tracts of territory to be measured in connection with the revenue survey provided an opportunity for the introduction of a standard land measurement into the Delhi Territory. 52 Hitherto land had been measured in bigahs by means of chains, ropes, or bamboo canes of varying lengths; and in 1826, Government proposed that a chain of standard pattern, 60 guz long, should be used by all revenue officers. Though conscious that such an innovation would not be popular with the cultivators of the soil, Metcalfe agreed to the introduction of the standard measure; so that in future, the bigah would consist of 3600 square guz, the equivalent of 3025 square yards, - a measure- 53 ment easily convertible into acres. Thus, during his Commissionership at Delhi, Metcalfe gave a definite impetus to the work of the revenue survey. After his departure, however, zeal flagged; and in the next five years little 54 progress was made.

Metcalfe had assumed charge of the revenue affairs of the

- 52. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 1st June. 1826. No. 76.
- 53. Ibid. 26th July. No. 78. (1826)
- 54. In 1832, when visiting the Upper Provinces, Lord Bentinck called a meeting of the Sadr Board of Revenue at Allahabad and all the revenue officers working under it "to decide the best means of simplifying and expediting the existing process of Survey and Settlement." (Bengal Letters Received 1st March 1833).
Later, native deputy collectors were appointed to assist in this work and the settlement was eventually completed in 1842.

Delhi Territory after a disastrous year when failure of the rains had reduced cultivation to an unprecedentedly low level. It was not to be expected that his presence would immediately convert disaster into prosperity, and the revenue returns for 1825 to 1826 show large balances still outstanding.⁵⁵ Yet during his period of office, the net revenue receipts more than doubled those of the previous year and the cost of collection⁵⁶ was reduced by more than two lakhs. When recommending Government to suspend the demand on the rabi crop in the Rohtuk area at the end of 1825,⁵⁷ it could not have escaped Metcalfe's notice that much of the devastation caused by the failure of the rains might have been mitigated had the westward extension of the Delhi Canal been complete. Metcalfe had always been an ardent supporter of the canal project; and he claimed the restoration of the Delhi Canal during his first residency as the greatest public work so far executed in the Delhi Territory.⁵⁸ At the beginning of his second period of office, its westward branch was completed; with the result that in 1826 and 1827, when embankments, dams and bridges had been built along the

55. In the Southern Division alone over 2 lakhs of rupees were written off as irrecoverable.
(Bengal Revenue Consultations. 13th July. 1826. No. 65.)
56. 1824--5 Net Receipts. Rs. 11,98,822; Charges. Rs. 9,96,262.
1825--6 " " Rs. 23,61,768; " Rs. 7,64,346.
(Bengal Revenue Consultations. 5th July. 1827. No. 76.)
57. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 22nd Dec. 1825. No. 44.
58. Metcalfe's Minute of 23rd Aug. 1830.
Bengal Revenue Consultations. 31st Aug. 1830. No. 36.

Rohtuk branch of Feroz Shah's canal, an additional 5,760
59
bigahs were brought under cultivation.

By the end of 1825, when Metcalfe took up his post at Delhi; the effects of the new customs code were beginning to be apparent. A study of the sayer accounts for 1825-1826 shows that no great loss of revenue had resulted from the change of system. Net receipts from Customs and Town Duties
60
during this year were five and a half lakhs of rupees, very little short of the annual revenue under the old system. Had it been possible to stop the extensive smuggling of salt into the Delhi Territory from the neighbouring jagir of Fyz
61
Muhammed Khan where it was produced, even this deficit would have disappeared. The most noticeable effect of the new system, however, was its impact on the trade of the western frontier of the Delhi Territory, where towns such as Bhiwani on the Rohtuk boundary developed into important entrepots. Here

59. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 22nd June 1826. No. 77.

The Delhi Canal. or Ali Murdan's Canal, which ran for 185 miles from the hills southward to Delhi was practically complete by the end of 1832 as was the further extension to Feroz Shah's Canal. This carried the waters into Hariana beyond Hansi and northward beyond Gohana to the northern boundary of Rohtuk - a total length of 240 miles.

Bengal Letters Received 21st Dec. 1830. paras 24-26. and Major Colvin's Canal Report. India and Bengal Despatches. (Revenue) 18th Jan. 1837.

60. Bengal Separate Consultations. 22nd June. 1826. No. 77.

61. Ibid. 9th July. 1824. No. 2

The extensive smuggling of salt was checked to a large extent when the town duty levied on its consumption within the city of Delhi was abolished in 1832; and it paid only the general duty levied on goods in transit.

Bengal Separate Consultations. 2nd Oct. 1832. No. 4.

goods from the Regulation Provinces and Delhi were exchanged for merchandise from the Rajput states and the north-west.

In Bhiwani large new bazaars sprang up which handled goods such as salt from the Samber Lake, drugs from Kabul and Multan, iron from Alwar and Gwalior, fine woollen blankets from Bikener, and British piece-goods and broad-cloth from

62

Bombay. Its merchants, moreover, were the chief contributors to customs revenue in Rohtuk, paying more than a lakh of
63
rupees annually in customs dues.

62. Bengal Separate Consultations. 5th July. 1827. No. 10.

63. No further change was made in the Customs system of the Delhi Territory while it remained a separate administrative unit; but its position on the western flank of the Bengal provinces led to certain modifications in the existing arrangements. In 1833 for instance, it was found advisable to abolish the transit duties in the frontier areas of Hariana on the north west, and of Rewari on the south west, because the small collections did not justify the expense of maintaining customs posts there. Instead, they were replaced by two parallel lines of chokies so placed that they could handle both incoming and outgoing merchandise. The customs posts already existing on both banks of the River Jumna were consolidated on the right bank and placed under the Delhi customs officers; and from the Jumna, a parallel line of preventive posts ran north-westward following the line of the Delhi canal, and south-westward along the Delhi frontier from Bhiwani to Agra.

(Bengal Letters Received 30th December. 1833. paras. 6-17)

The general effectiveness of this new preventive line was such that after the Delhi Territory was incorporated into the Presidency of Agra in 1834, the Governor abolished all internal customs posts within the province. This abolition of the internal transit duties was extended to the Bengal Presidency in 1836 after C.E. Trevelyan had presented his Report on the Inland Customs and Town Duties of the Bengal Presidency, and was followed almost immediately by the abolition of the Town Duties.

(India & Bengal Letters Received-Separate. Nos. 1 & 4 of 1836.)

Metcalfe's arrival in Delhi coincided with a change in Government policy whereby the proceeds from Town Duties were no longer exclusively reserved for the development of public works.⁶⁴

As a result, Committees of Local Improvement were able to gain Government approval only for outstanding needs; and consequently, the scheme for draining and re-paving the streets of Delhi, many of which had not been repaired since the days of Shah Jehan, could only be accomplished piece-meal.⁶⁵

The religious buildings of Delhi, supported by their endowments from tainul property, fared better: and between 1825 and 1827, Government sanctioned the repair of three of the most important Delhi mosques - the Jama Masjid, the Kali Masjid, and the Qutab Minar.⁶⁶ Metcalfe, however, considered the Committee of Local Agents who administered the revenue from religious property to be redundant; and he thought that their duties could be performed more effectively by the revenue and judicial officers of Government. As a result of his recommendation, the Governor-General

64. Metcalfe's Minute of 23rd Aug. 1830.

Bengal Revenue Consultations. 31st Aug. 1830. No. 36

65. In 1827, the road connecting the Chāni Chowk and the Chowri Bayar was repaired at a cost of Rs. 5,309; and a grant of Rs. 3553 was authorised for the repair of the Khas Bazaar. These meagre improvements were sanctioned at a time when the Town Duty Fund of Delhi stood at over 2 lakhs of rupees.

Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. W.P. 7th June 1827. Nos. 18 & 20.

66. Bengal Letters Received (Rev) 16th Aug. 1827. paras 414-422.

in Council decided that the Delhi Committee of Local Agents should be disbanded; and in 1826, their work was taken over⁶⁷ by the Principal Assistants.

What Government took away with one hand, it gave with the other; for in 1825, when Town Duty Funds ceased to be reserved for the development of public works, it authorised the first⁶⁸ educational grant to be made from public funds. A Committee of Public Instruction, charged with the duty of surveying the educational needs of the Bengal Presidency and of devising measures for its improvement, was set up in Calcutta; and a lakh of rupees was placed at its disposal each year for educational developments. Apart from private tuition in the wealthier homes of Delhi and the efforts of William Fraser to⁶⁹ educate the children of local zamindars in the country-side, there were no educational establishments of importance in Delhi except the college established in 1792 for the education of⁷⁰ Muhammadan students. It was this institution, supported mainly by voluntary subscriptions from the Muslim population of the city, which Government decided to use as the nucleus of

67. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 6th July. 1826. No. 45.
and 29th Dec. 1826. No. 96.

68. Bengal Letters Received.
(Educational Letter) of 27th Jan. 1826 } para. 1.

69. Between 1814 and 1823, William Fraser at his own expense established four schools for the sons of hereditary cultivators of the land. In all, there were 80 boys and four masters; and Fraser's main idea was to train these boys to take part in the administration of their own districts.

70. Gazetteer of the Delhi District. p. 51.

the Delhi College; and in 1825, the Committee of Public Instruction allocated to it a monthly grant of Rs.600. The income of the College was further augmented by Rs.250 each month from the Delhi authorities on account of wugf and lawaris⁷¹ property previously administered by the Local Agents. The College was housed in the Madrissa of Ghazi-ud-din Khan, " an edifice of great beauty and celebrity,"⁷² which was completely renovated at Government's expense, a grant of Rs.7115 from the Town Duty Fund being set aside for this purpose.

The Delhi College was inaugurated on its new basis shortly before Metcalfe came back to Delhi in 1825; and a Committee of Management consisting of the Commissioner, the Principal Assistant of the Delhi Division, and Dr. Ludlow,⁷³ was appointed; with J.H.Taylor, the former secretary of the disbanded Committee of Local Agents, as superintendent. Later, influential Indian gentlemen were invited to join this Committee of Management which superintended the general needs of the College and reported⁷⁴ annually to the Committee of Public Instruction in Calcutta. Government considered that the main business of the College should be to impart " useful knowledge " and that the first

71. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 1st Oct.1827.Nos.50 & 54.

72. Educational Letter of 27th Jan.1827. para.15

73. Surgeon to the Residency.

74. Bengal Letters Received.21st Aug.1829.paras 18-19.

task of its 120 students should be to acquire a command of the Hindustani and Persian languages, though the more advanced students might proceed to a study of Arabic, mathematics, and philosophy. Metcalfe thought that the establishment of an English professorship in the College would " be more valuable than all the other arrangements " ⁷⁵ and thus foreshadowed an ⁷⁶ important future development. Meanwhile, during his second residency at Delhi, he saw the College firmly established under its new constitution, attracting students not only from Delhi but from all parts of the Upper Provinces.

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 Second only to Walter Ewer's criticism of the Delhi administration was the adverse report on its judicial system made to Government in 1824 by Henry Batson as a result of his

75. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 22nd Feb. 1827. No. 63.

76. In 1827 practical expression was given to Metcalfe's idea by the formation of classes attached to the Delhi College for the study of the English language and literature: and shortly afterwards these classes formed the basis of the Delhi Institute which functioned as a separate department entirely devoted to the acquisition of knowledge through the medium of the English tongue. After the generous endowment of the Delhi College in 1829 by the Nawab Istimad-ud-Dowlah, minister at the court of Oudh, by a gift of Rs. 1,70,000, public funds were freed for the provision of a new building for the Delhi Institute which flourished alongside the College until 1877 when both College and Institute ceased to exist and all higher learning in the Upper Provinces was transferred to Lahore, greatly to the grief of the population of Delhi.
 (Gazetteer of the Delhi District. pp. 150-151 and Bengal Letters Received 21st Aug. 1829. paras. 45-47.)

experience as a member of the Board of Revenue. He complained that procedure in the Delhi courts was irregular, and that justice was administered either with extreme severity or with undue laxity. On Metcalfe's appointment to Delhi in 1825, the Governor-General in Council emphasised the importance of the Commissioner's judicial duties, stressing the necessity for prompt gaol deliveries and the punctual despatch of the half-⁷⁷ yearly reports to Government. Lest the urgency of the Commissioner's political and revenue duties should prevent adequate attention being given to the judicial aspect of his work, Metcalfe was provided with a personal secretary. Richard Wells was to be available for any service the Commissioner might require: but it was his special duty " to complete and examine statements " from the Principal Assistants and to " attest and issue precepts and other processes of the Commissioner's ⁷⁸ civil and criminal courts."

Criticism of judicial procedure in the Delhi Territory had been too widely publicised for Government to lose sight of this issue, and in 1826 Metcalfe was called to account in connection with two aspects of his judicial work: namely, the irregular

77. These reports gave details of crimes committed in the five divisions of the Delhi Territory and the sentences passed on offenders.

78. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 6th Oct. 1825. No. 48.

procedure adopted in the Delhi courts; and the severity of the sentences passed on prisoners convicted of murder, condemning them to solitary confinement in chains for life. After receiving the report of gaol deliveries for the first half of 1826, Government challenged Metcalfe to explain why he had acquitted so many of those connected with the large-scale robbery at the Beree fair after they had been committed for trial by the Principal Assistant of the Rohtuk Division.⁷⁹ The Commissioner's explanation that he had set aside the Principal Assistant's investigation and based his verdict on evidence produced solely before himself as judge, brought forth a request from Government that in future he should conform to the practice of the Nizamat Adalat in the Regulation Provinces where due weight was always given to the magistrate's proceedings by the Circuit Judge; and that details of the magistrate's investigation should be available for the Law Officer's perusal before he delivered his fatwa. Metcalfe had no choice but to comply: but the incident shows to what extent judicial practice in the Regulation Provinces had crept into the Delhi Territory during the years between Metcalfe's first and second residencies.

On the more serious question of the inhumanity of certain sentences passed during his first period of office, Metcalfe also had to yield; but he did not retreat without a struggle. Shortly

79. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations.W.P.
26th July.1826.No.14.

after he arrived in Delhi, he was asked to report the number of persons in the Delhi gaol confined in separate cells by neck chains.⁸⁰

Metcalfe replied that there were 16 persons thus imprisoned undergoing life sentences for murder: and he declared, "I see no reason at present to doubt the expediency or the propriety or the efficacy of the mode of their im-

prisonment."⁸¹ Though the Governor-General in Council disagreed and thought that solitary confinement should never be

more than a temporary expedient,⁸² he hesitated to order a man of Metcalfe's standing to alter his practice. Metcalfe,

however, sensed that public opinion was against him and gave way. " Although satisfied in my own mind of the superior

propriety and humanity and equal efficacy of solitary imprisonment for life compared with legal homicide," he wrote,⁸³

" I do not in practice presume to set up my opinions against those ----of Government.---Having learned that prejudice

prevailed against this mode of punishment, I have not had recourse to it since my arrival at Delhi; and now --- it

will never be renewed by me." Thus ended the practice of solitary confinement by neck chains in the Delhi Territory;

evidence of a strangely cruel streak in one who, in most matters, was kindly and generous.

80.	Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations.	W.P.2nd Feb.1826.No.21
81.	Ibid.	6th April.1826.No.11
82.	Ibid.	15th June. 1826.No.9
83.	Ibid.	18th May. 1826.No.10

In spite of Metcalfe's severity, perhaps even because of it, orderliness was restored in almost every part of the Delhi Territory. At the time of his departure in 1827, crimes such as dacoity were unknown; highway robbery with violence was of rare occurrence; and if property was stolen, it was usually recoverable.⁸⁴ In less than two years, Metcalfe had succeeded in re-establishing a firm control over the Principal Assistants and their subordinates; and when he left Delhi, the Resident's authority was felt in every branch of the administration. Externally he had forced the warring states of Rajputana to submit to the policy of the British Government; and in the distracted states of Alwar, Jaipur, and Bharatpur, he had introduced a measure of stability. His short second residency, however, must have rendered him acutely conscious of the extent to which the administration of the Delhi Territory was beginning to resemble that of the Regulation Provinces; and upholder of the old regime though he was, he could not stem⁸⁵ the tide. He left Delhi for Calcutta on 26th July 1827 to take his seat on the Supreme Council; and with his departure, Delhi bade farewell to the greatest of her Residents.

84. Bengal Letters Received. 9th March 1830. (Judicial)
paras 4 & 5.

85. Bengal Political Consultations. 24th Aug. 1827. No. 41.

Chapter 8.

The administration of the Delhi Territory between 1827 and 1832.

From the time when Delhi had first been placed under the jurisdiction of a Resident in 1803, it had been the underlying intention of Government that the Delhi Territory should eventually become similar in character and administration to the older provinces of Bengal which had long been subject to the Company's Regulations: and in the years which followed Metcalfe's departure from Delhi in 1827, the final stages of this evolution took place. The process had assumed tangible form in 1819 when the civil and political functions of the Resident had been separated, and the Delhi Territory had been divided into districts for administrative purposes: but further progress was retarded by the misfortunes and misgovernment of the Board of Revenue, and by the decisive character of Metcalfe's short rule between 1825 and 1827. After he had left Delhi, however, political and administrative developments occurred which diminished the need for a separate and distinctive government in the Delhi Territory; and which opened the way for the abolition of the Residency in 1832, and the incorporation of the Delhi Territory into the province of Agra two years later.

Apart from his position as head of the executive government in the Delhi Territory, the political importance of the Resident rested, in the main, upon his connection with the Delhi royal family and upon the influential control he exercised over the dependent Rajput states. Between 1827 and 1832, however, circumstances combined to lessen the prestige of the office of Resident in all these spheres. Akbar's appeal against his treatment at the hands of the Governor-General in Council was taken before the highest authorities in England during these years; and as a result of the judgment given, the prestige of the Delhi royal house steadily declined. During this period also, the Rajput states ceased to hold the foremost place in Government's attention; and interest shifted to the frontiers of the Bombay Presidency and the Indus, where bands of thugs threatened to revive the terrors of the Pindaris. One consequence of Government's preoccupation with this new menace was a stricter application of the policy of non-intervention in the Rajput states; and this, in turn, led to a reduction of the British political agencies established there. This closure of the Rajput agencies tended to diminish the prestige of the Resident at Delhi under whose supervision they worked; and was a decisive factor in the Governor-General's decision to convert the Delhi Residency itself into a political agency with a very limited political jurisdiction.

The process whereby the Delhi Residency was shorn of much of its characteristic importance and prestige was in some measure accelerated by the men who succeeded Metcalfe. Between 1827 and 1832, Delhi had four rulers none of whom possessed his outstanding political and administrative ability. Sir Edward Colebrooke, Metcalfe's immediate successor, was suspended from office two years later on charges of corruption and was eventually dismissed from the Company's service. Francis Hawkins, who took charge of the Residency in the interval between Colebrooke's suspension and the appointment of William Martin, was so completely lacking in tact that he provoked complaints both from the palace and the Residency staff. Martin came to Delhi from the Hyderabad Residency at the end of 1830 and was both able and experienced; but when the decision was taken to reduce the Delhi Resident to the status of an Agent, Martin was transferred to the Residency of Indore. In the ensuing months during which the Delhi Territory remained a separate administrative unit, its political duties devolved upon William Fraser.

1. He took over the Delhi Residency on 31st July. 1827.
(Bengal Political Consultations. 17th Aug. 1827. No. 66)
2. Ibid. 17th July. 1829. No. 22.
3. Bengal Letters Received. 30th Dec. 1829. para. 1.
4. Bengal Political Consultations. 31st Jan. 1831. No. 9.
5. Ibid. 12th March. 1832. No. 22.

Of these four men the most congenial to the royal family was Colebrooke, who had a great capacity for intrigue. It was typical of the changing times that his undoing came about through the revolt of Charles Trevelyan, one of the young Assistants at the Residency, who refused to become a party to Colebrooke's systematic corruption. Shortly after his arrival at Delhi, Colebrooke and his Assistants were required to take the oath by which they bound themselves " to account to Government for all presents and nazrs in money or effects " and to have " no pecuniary dealings with any native state, princes, or chieftains " except in the course of public duty.⁶ Charles Trevelyan, brought up in the tradition of an English vicarage, was the first of a generation of Indian civil servants who carried their own high standard of ethical conduct into the sphere of their official duties. He refused to contravene his oath and become involved in the system of corruption which permeated the Resident's household. Trevelyan protested by absenting himself from the Resident's table; and in so doing incurred the enmity of one who held in his hands the power to impede or advance his future career. Trevelyan's attitude was, in the first place, an effort to protect his personal integrity; but it developed during 1828 into a determination to challenge the whole system of bribery and corruption which emanated from the Residency.

Dr. Spear's chapter on the Colebrooke case in his "Twilight
 of the Mughals" ⁷ does full justice to the significance of this
 interesting but sordid affair, and renders unnecessary further
 detailed reference here. No better summary, however, could
 be given of the events which provided one of the greatest
 scandals in the history of the Delhi Territory than the account
 written in a letter to his mother by Trevelyan at the end of
 1829 ⁸. He described "the fearful contest" in which he had
 been engaged "with Sir E. Colebrooke, or rather with the system
 of Indian corruption as supported by him - by his numerous
 retainers, and by his very numerous and powerful accomplices.
 ----I found myself associated with a system of iniquity in
 the highest degree disgraceful to our national character;" he
 wrote. "This I resolved to crush; and after many ineffectual
 remonstrances to Sir E. Colebrooke, I instituted for this
 purpose a prosecution in the City court against Ram Gopal,
 Sir E. Colebrooke's confidential servant and principal agent
 in the system of corruption.-----Upon which, Sir E. Colebrooke
 himself entered the lists against me, suspended by his official
 authority the prosecution of Ram Gopal; suspended me from my
 functions under pretence of deputing me to take charge of the
 political Agency to Kotah; instituted a counter-prosecution
 supported by all his official authority and by false witnesses
 from among his own dependants, against an agent of my own;

7. Chapter 8 pp.167-181.

8. Trevelyan M.S.S. Letter written on 30th Dec.1829.

and intimated to me that he intended to prosecute me in the Supreme Court for a conspiracy --- It now became plain that I must either be crushed by the system I had provoked or crush it root and branch; and I accordingly directly charged Sir E.Colebrooke with corruption. Upon this followed Sir E.Colebrooke's suspension from office and the setting up of a commission for his trial - and Mr.W.Fraser, an officer who supported him with all his official influence, was suspended also. We are now awaiting the result of the proceedings on the trial which have been forwarded to Calcutta."

The exhaustive enquiry conducted by Walter Ewer and Charles Mac Sween resulted in the condemnation of Colebrooke who was found guilty of having appropriated to his own use nazrs in money and other presents of value in violation of his oath of office; and of having sold for considerable sums furniture and other articles which rightly should have belonged to Government. A typical instance of the abuse of his office was Colebrooke's reception of a large bribe from the Raja of Patiala in return for reversing a decision made by Captain Murray, Superintendant of Sikh and Hill Affairs, concerning the Doladi lands on the borders of Patiala and Nohas. A few months after the trial, on Hawkin's recommendation, Government disallowed this verdict; and the boundary between the two⁹ estates was adjusted according to the original award. When

endorsing the Governor-General's decision to dismiss Colebrooke, the Directors remarked that such a measure was " due to the respectability of the service itself and necessary as a security to the people of India against a renewal in time to come of such a system of corruption."¹⁰ It certainly underlined

Government's intention to punish severely any infringement of its recent decision to abolish the custom of natives presenting nazrs to public functionaries when paying official and

¹¹complimentary visits. With regard to Delhi, the whole incident did much to discredit the office of Resident in the eyes both of Government and of the people; and thus it contributed indirectly to the Governor-General's decision to replace the Delhi Residency by an Agency.

Another sign of the times was the abolition of the " table allowance " which hitherto had always been granted to Residents at native courts. Hawkins, who became Acting-Resident at ¹²Delhi on 14th October 1829, was thus relieved of the necessity of keeping a public table. From the first, Hawkins was a misfit at Delhi. He had little sympathy with the forms and ceremonies which were prized so highly within the precincts of the palace: and succeeding as he did to a situation which required the most tactful handling, he raised alarm and

10. Bengal Despatches (Political) 24th Nov. 1830.

11. Bengal Political Consultations. 19th June. 1829. No. 85.

12. Ibid. 14th Oct. 1829. No. 22.

indignation by riding rough-shod over people's legitimate rights as well as over their prejudices. As a result, complaints reached Government from all quarters. Determined to make a complete clearance of everyone connected with the corrupt practices of his predecessor, he dismissed the permanent native staff attached to the Residency;¹³ but he was obliged to re-instate them¹⁴ when Government condemned "the hasty and indiscriminate dismissal of the office establishments" as "highly improper and unjust."¹⁵ Hawkins outraged the feelings of the royal family to such a degree that the King protested to the Governor-General and asked for Hawkins to be removed.¹⁶ When called upon to explain his "disgraceful and improper behaviour,"¹⁷ Hawkins indicated quite clearly the contempt in which he held Government's conformity to the etiquette of the Delhi court. He thought, for instance, that the presentation of nazrs to the King and to the Heir Apparent was "a humiliating ceremony;" and he tried, without success, to persuade Government to abandon the practice.¹⁸ During his first visit to the palace, he incurred the enmity of Mumtaz Mahal by refusing to remain standing in her presence; and he unrepentantly declared

13. Bengal Political Consultations. 19th March. 1830. No. 4.

14. With the exception of Edward Colebrooke, the illegitimate son of Sir E Colebrooke, who under his father's regime had held the office of Accountant to the Residency.

15. Bengal Political Consultations. 19th March. 1830. No. 5.

16. Bengal Letters Received. 14th Oct. 1830 paras 142-& 143.

17. Bengal Political Consultations. 8th Jan. 1830. No. 45.

18. Bengal Letters Received. 9th Oct. 1830. para 48.

that in so doing, he " did no more than was necessary to maintain the dignity of the high and important station of Resident and Civil Commissioner at Delhi " ¹⁹ In addition, Hawkins annoyed the King by neglecting to enquire after his health, and by refusing to accept the customary nosegays which Akbar sent him. His crowning indiscretion was to ride into the courtyard of the Diwan-i-Khas without dismounting.

It was obvious that the officiating Resident was devoid of any sense of deference due to the King and his family, and had no intention of conforming to customs which he considered humiliating to himself and derogatory to his office. The Governor-General called him sharply to account and in reply, Hawkins declared that the King's letter of protest was inspired by the partisans of Mirza Salim, Akbar's favourite son who had succeeded Jehangir in his affections. There was evidence of a plot to secure the succession of this young prince to the throne of Delhi; and the conspirators thought that by discrediting Hawkins in the eyes of Government, they might secure the restoration of Colebrooke. In spite of this, Hawkins had little hope that the authorities in Calcutta would accept his explanation as satisfactory; and he held himself in readiness for the command to leave Delhi. As a matter of fact, he continued to officiate as Resident for nearly a year;

19. Bengal Political Consultations. 19th March 1830. No 6 and Spear. op.cit. pp.52. & 53.

though his intercourse with the royal family came to an abrupt end. Thomas Metcalfe, the Principal Assistant of the Centre Division, was asked to take charge of all palace affairs, which he supervised until Martin arrived at the end of 1830.

The new Resident assumed his political duties as the Governor-General's representative at the court of Akbar²⁰ at a time when the long struggle between the King of Delhi and the Supreme Government at Calcutta was approaching a climax: and the unpleasant task of acting as intermediary devolved upon Martin. The King was old and in poor health; and the influence of Mumtaz Mahal, now exerted in favour of her son Mirza Salim, was still paramount. Lord William Bentinck, who had succeeded Amherst as Governor-General in 1828, had to deal with a situation which had been rendered more difficult by the good intentions of his predecessor. Believing that his meeting with Akbar in 1827 had produced better relations between Government and the court of Delhi, Amherst had renewed direct epistolary correspondence with the King, by informing him of Colebrooke's appointment as Resident.²¹ The Governor-General had no intention of reverting to the objectionable designation of "fiduce Akbar Shah;" and he adopted a style of address similar to that used in correspondence with the Kings of Persia

20. At the time of Martin's arrival at Delhi, Akbar was 75. He died, aged 82, on 29th Sept. 1837.

21. Bengal Political Consultations. 21st Sept. 1827. No. 65.

and Kabul. This alteration in the alqab was intended to recognise the superior rank of the King as a crowned monarch and at the same time to emphasise the authoritative and independent position of the head of the British Government in India. Amherst had reason to believe that this procedure was acceptable to the King;²² and it was, therefore, with some consternation and annoyance that Bentinck in 1831 found that Akbar had made the alteration in the alqab one of his chief complaints against the Government in his appeal to England, describing it as "humiliating and degrading."²³ Bentinck's reaction was to suspend all intercourse, both written and personal, with the King; thus reverting to the relationship which had existed between the court of Delhi and the Governor-General after Hasting's decision in 1818. "I felt it would be impossible" wrote Bentinck to the Directors²⁴ "for me to impose upon His Majesty a repetition of the supposed indignity---and to no other terms could I have consented consistently with the respect I entertain for the opinions of my two immediate predecessors; or indeed with the very decided opinion I hold that to continue to acknowledge in this pageant any of the attributes of sovereignty ----is not only a questionable but a very objectionable policy." Bentinck

22. Bengal Political Consultations. 21st Sept. 1827. No. 65.

23. Ibid. 13th Jan. 1832. No. 6

24. Bengal Letters Received. --Letter dated 10th Dec. 1831.

accordingly avoided a meeting with Akbar on his visit to the Upper Provinces in the winter of 1831; and incidentally he thus spoiled the plan by which Mirza Salim was chosen to welcome him to the Delhi Territory in preference to his elder brother, the Heir Apparent.²⁵

Contrary to expectations, Akbar had taken umbrage at the alteration in the alqab; but the fundamental reason for his antagonism and his appeal to the authorities in England was Amherst's refusal, on Metcalfe's advice, to accede to the Paper of Requests presented to him before he left Delhi in 1827.

Apart from some minor concessions concerning the royal jagirs, all Akbar's demands were refused: - from his claim to receive a stipend equal in value to the current revenue of the Delhi Territory, to the denial of his right to confer honours on persons outside the royal household.²⁶ The result was that the veiled threat contained in the King's letter to Amherst just before he left India was converted into fact. "If, after Your Lordship's departure, the Supreme Council think proper to carry into effect the promises and engagements of Lord Wellesley it will be well;" wrote Akbar,²⁷ "if, which God forbid, they should raise any doubts and difficulties, then the whole business must be transferred to the Court of Directors." Thus came about Ram Mohun Roy's mission to

25. Bengal Political Consultations. 2nd Dec. 1831. No. 24.

26. Ibid. 1st Feb. 1828. Nos. 1 & 2.

27. Ibid. " " No. 7.

England: and on Bentinck's Government fell the task of replying to the questions and criticism which the skilful pleading of the King's emissary evoked in high quarters.

As Dr Spear has given a full account of the manner in which Ram Mohun Roy was received by all parties in England; of the attitude taken by the Court of Directors who upheld the policy of the Indian Government, and of the less favourable reaction of Charles Grant at the Board of Control,²⁸ further detail on these points is unnecessary. In the course of his mission, Ram Mohun Roy offered on the King's behalf to commute all the royal claims for an annual pension of thirty lakhs of rupees, a sum equal in value to the current revenue of the Delhi Territory. This the Directors refused to concede; and they embarked on a protracted struggle with the Board of Control in defence of the attitude they had adopted towards the royal family of Delhi since the settlement of 1805. For many months, proposal and counter-proposal followed each other; until Charles Grant at length withdrew his opposition and endorsed the decision of the Court. The Directors agreed to increase the annual stipend of the King of Delhi by three lakhs of rupees upon certain conditions; and this decision was conveyed to the Governor-General in Council in a despatch dated 13th February 1833.²⁹

28. Spear.P. "Twilight of the Mughals." pp.46-49; & 53-54;

29. Bengal Despatches (Political) 13th Feb.1833.

It ran as follows: - "We are willing to sanction an extension of the provision at present fixed for the support of His Majesty----to fifteen lakhs of rupees per annum, leaving it to your discretion to distribute the additional three lakhs among members of the royal family in such manner as may appear to you just and proper. It must be distinctly understood that the further pecuniary grants which we have now authorised are to be received by the King of Delhi in full satisfaction of all claims of every description he may be supposed to possess."

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These terms were unacceptable to Akbar; for he was neither willing to renounce his claims on the Company nor prepared to spend the proffered increase on his poor relations: and, in spite of many protests and negotiations during the next few years, neither he nor his successors drew the increased stipend. In fact the decision given on this issue by the Directors in 1833 was final; and their verdict was never again called in question. In spite of the sympathy with which the King's appeal had been received in England, there was never any serious intention of handing back to the inadequate management of Mughal officials the administration of the lands assigned by Wellesley in 1805; and after 1833, it was generally acknowledged that Akbar's attempt to prove that he had been victimised by the policy of the Indian Government had failed.

Never again could he threaten to accuse the Governor-General in Council to a higher authority in England; but in India, his attempt to do so was neither forgiven nor forgotten. It did much to reconcile Metcalfe to the changes concerning the Delhi Territory made in 1832, and to the decision taken two years later to incorporate it into the newly-formed presidency of Agra.³¹

The decision concerning the King's appeal coincided with the appointment of an Agent to the court of Delhi instead of a Resident; a sign that the position of the royal house of Delhi was no longer considered to be of such distinctive importance as formerly. For the next twenty-five years, Akbar and his successors continued to be stipendiaries of the Company. They retained the nominal title of King, though their rank and dignities tended to become more like those of great noblemen than of royal personages: and the Governor-General's Agent at their court became of little more significance than Agents at Lucknow or Hyderabad. Thus the final rejection of the King's claims in 1833 marked the beginning of a decline in the peculiar prestige attached to Delhi as the capital of the Mughal Emperors;—a decline which became more pronounced with the passing of the years; until with the Mutiny

31. In 1834, Charles Metcalfe was appointed the first Governor of Agra, and thus the Delhi Territory came once more under his jurisdiction. (India Political Proceedings. 21st Nov. 1834. No. 1.) During the few months that he held this office, and later when he was officiating as Governor-General, he consistently threw the whole of his authority against implementing the Court's decision to increase the royal stipend by three lakhs, declaring it to be "an unwarrantable permanent waste of a large sum of public money."
(India Political Proceedings. 28th Jan. 1835. No. 1.)

of 1858 the wheel came full circle, and for a brief period Delhi once again took its place as the centre from which revolt against British authority emanated.

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The years 1827 to 1832 also witnessed a loosening of the ties which linked the Delhi Residency to the principalities which lay near its frontiers. Besides areas such as Haryana and Hissar which had long been incorporated into the administrative districts of the Delhi Territory, and regions such as Ajmer and the Sikh and Hill States which under Deputy Superintendents were administered as separate units, there were several states in Rajputana which came under the Resident's jurisdiction. In many of these states, British Political Agents had been appointed whose business it was to advise the native rulers to act in accordance with the Governor-General's wishes and to secure the prompt payment of tribute due under treaty engagements. These Agents, who resided in the native states, worked under the direction of the Resident at Delhi and were responsible to him. Except in times of crisis - and in native states crises could be frequent - the Agent was instructed not to interfere in the internal management of the state; but it was one of his chief duties to see that the right of the British Government to control the external relations of the subordinate state was not infringed. Apart from the time when the Rajput states had been temporarily dissociated from Delhi, this surveillance

exercised either by the Resident in person or by a Political Agent acting under his direction formed one of the Resident's major responsibilities; and Bentinck's decision to close most of the Political Agencies and separate the Rajput states from the jurisdiction of Delhi was a prelude to the abolition of the Delhi Residency itself in 1832.

Though the detailed history of the Rajput states is outside the scope of this thesis, some comment on the development of their relationship with the paramount power during the years when they were under the superintendence of the Resident at Delhi, is necessary; for between 1827 and 1832 there was a marked modification in Government's policy toward them. During these years, also, events occurred which helped to clarify and define the obligations inherent in the treaties of subordinate alliance made in 1817 and 1818; and it was the task of the Resident at Delhi both to interpret and to implement Government's decisions as they affected the states under his charge. In this intricate field of political jurisdiction, Charles Metcalfe had no equal. His less-gifted successors at Delhi, however, lacked his sure touch in dealing with the Rajput states; and between 1827 and 1832 some of their actions were openly disavowed by the Governor-General in Council - a circumstance which could not fail to be detrimental to the esteem with which the office of Resident was regarded by the people of Delhi.

The most noticeable trend in Government's policy towards its subordinate dependencies between 1827 and 1832 was a stricter application of the principle of non-intervention in their internal affairs: and this was particularly apparent in the three states of Bharatpur, Alwar, and Jaipur, where British intervention under Metcalfe was most pronounced.³³ In Bharatpur, for instance, where the state was beginning to recover from the catastrophe of 1825, though it was still necessary to maintain a Political Agent and British troops there, the Agent remained in the background and helped the native ministers to form a stable administration. In addition,³⁴ Colonel Lockett and his deputies managed to secure regular payments of the Bharatpur debt³⁵ and trained the young Raja Balwant Singh in the principles of good government. Throughout these years of reconstruction, the Bharatpur ministers became progressively stronger; and although in 1832 it was considered advisable to retain a Political Agent in Bharatpur until the Raja attained his majority, the British establishment was reduced to a minimum and British troops were finally withdrawn.³⁶

In the neighbouring state of Alwar, which was rent by party

33. vide supra chapter.7. pp.233-7

34. Lockett was Agent at Bharatpur between 1827 and 1832, though Trevelyan and Lushington deputised for him during his absence in Rajputana.

35. Bengal Letters Received. (Pol.) 9th Oct.1830.para.53.

36. Ibid. 2nd April.1832.para.86.

strife, it was more difficult for Government to adhere to the principle of non-intervention: yet between 1827 and 1832, the course of events in this State showed how great an influence could be exerted by the paramount power without direct interference in the internal affairs of a subordinate dependency. In Alwar, there was no Political Agent residing at the Rao Raja's court; and the Resident at Delhi was directly responsible for seeing that the widespread disorder within the state did not adversely affect adjoining territories. Against the advice of the Governor-General, the Rao Raja Beni Singh had placed in power a party headed by the Khowas brothers who had been implicated in the attempt to assassinate the Nawab Ahmed Buskh Khan at Delhi in 1824. Because of this open disregard of the wishes of the paramount power, both Amherst and Metcalfe refused to correspond with or to receive the Rao Raja; and this manifestation of displeasure by the Governor-General and the Resident lowered Beni Singh's prestige in the eyes of the surrounding princes to such an extent that it eventually caused him to sue for a reconciliation with the British Government.³⁷ He was not received back into favour, however, until the Alwar nobles had proved sufficiently strong to overthrow the Khowas party and establish a government in Alwar which the Governor-General could approve.³⁸

37. Bengal Letters Received. (Pol.) 10th April. 1829. para. 80.

38. Ibid. " 8th May. 1829. " 40.

Meanwhile, in Delhi the Resident had taken more drastic measures to induce Beni Singh to conform to the wishes of the British Government: and in order to secure the downfall of the Khowas party, Colebrooke had seized Mulla Khowas while he was in Delhi and had shut him up in the fort of Hansi as a state prisoner. If the paramount power was unwilling to intervene openly in Alwar, it certainly could not condone interference of this kind on the part of its subordinate officer; and Colebrooke's action was denounced by Government as being contrary to " the principles of policy laid down in former instructions--
 39
 ---towards the state of Alwar," and as being unjust. He was ordered to release Mulla Khowas, although the Governor-General was aware that such a measure would discredit the Resident and aggravate the situation in Alwar. When reporting this occurrence to the Directors, the Governor-General formulated the principles which lay behind this decision. Though the Rao Rajah had acted contrary to the advice of the British Government, " still it was always proposed to leave
 40
 that prince a free agent" he wrote. " Had we thought proper to compel attention to our advice, it was of course at all times in the power of the British Government to do so: but as it did not consist with our policy to exercise forcible intervention in the state of Alwar --- we contented ourselves

39. Bengal Political Consultations. 23rd May. 1828. No. 14.

40. Bengal Letters Received. (Political) 3th May. 1829. paras 42. 43.

with indicating generally the views and wishes of the Supreme Government." . Mulla Khowas did not long enjoy his freedom; for shortly after his return to Alwar, he was assassinated when leaving the palace.⁴¹ Although Beni Singh was received back into friendly relations with the British Government, a close watch was kept upon his actions. He was held responsible when his subjects committed outrages on the neighbouring territories of Tijara and Ferozepur: and when he failed to bring the offenders to book, he was obliged to pay for British troops to do so.⁴² By the end of 1832, however, there was peace on the frontiers of Alwar; and a reasonable measure of stability within the state.

In Jaipur also the years 1827 to 1832 saw the principle of non-intervention emphasised. As in Alwar, there had been a considerable measure of intervention before 1827, the paramount power upholding the rights of the hereditary thakars against the Regent Rani and her favourite, to the extent of guaranteeing the thakars its protection.⁴³ The threat of civil war was so great that in 1825 a Political Agent was appointed whose main task was to preserve peace and secure the punctual payment of the Jaipur tribute which had fallen into arrears. After 1827, this policy of direct intervention

41. Bengal Letters Received. (Political) 3rd Oct. 1829. para. 39.
 42. Ibid. " 1st Oct. 1832. para. 125.
 43. Vide supra. chapter 8. p. 236

was noticeably modified: so much so that the Rani was informed that although the Governor-General did not approve the appointment of Jhota Ram as Prime Minister, he was prepared to
⁴⁴
 acquiesce in his nomination; and at the same time it was made clear to the thakars that the British guarantee would operate in their favour only if the Rani pursued vindictive measures against those who had opposed her in 1826. Though "great surprise and bitterness were expressed by the chiefs --- at
⁴⁵
 this change of policy," it did procure a measure of harmony in the administration of Jaipur. Once the Rani and her nobles realised that the paramount power would intervene only if either side resorted to force, they closed their ranks and
⁴⁶
 became reconciled. Two immediate results ensued: large arrears of tribute were paid; and it became possible to close
⁴⁷
 the British Agency in Jaipur, its affairs being placed in the charge of the political officer at Ajmer.

Thus in the three states most intimately connected with Delhi, Government's policy was considerably modified between 1827 and 1832; and a similar trend was noticeable in the more outlying states of Rajputana. Here, though the emphasis was still upon non-intervention, the extent of British interference

44. Bengal Letters Received. 8th May 1829. paras. 104 & 105.

45. Ibid. 3rd Oct. 1829. paras 97 - 99.

46. Bengal Political Consultations. 9th Dec. 1831. No. 7.

47. Bengal Letters Received. 4th March. 1831.

had perforce to vary in proportion to the degree of tranquillity prevailing within the subordinate state. In Harowti, for instance, the political Agent intervened decisively to prevent a general massacre of Jodhpur troops by the people of Bundi who suspected them of assassinating the chief minister of their state: ⁴⁸ and the situation in Bundi and the neighbouring state of Kotah remained so unsettled that Government decided to retain a Political Agent there after 1832. Generally, however, the paramount power avoided direct intervention: and used its influence to bring about the peaceful settlement of disputes between neighbouring dependent states where quarrels over such matters as boundaries and water-courses often threatened to disturb the peace.

On more than one occasion between 1827 and 1832, the paramount power found it necessary to define the terms upon which it was prepared to intervene between the ruler of a subordinate state and his rebellious subjects: and two Delhi Residents incurred the censure of Government for misinterpreting its policy on this issue. Colebrooke in 1828 was criticised for authorising a military detachment to assist the Raja of

48. Bengal Political Consultations. 25th June. 1830. No. 6 and
" 13th Oct. 1830. Nos. 23 - 32.

Trevelyan won high praise for his prompt intervention, though a long and acrimonious correspondence ensued between him and Cavendish at Ajmer who upheld the rights of the Jodhpur contingent.

Jodhpur in putting down a rebellion in his state;⁴⁹ and Hawkins was obliged to countermand orders he had sent to Brigadier Wilson to proceed on a similar mission to Bikaner.⁵⁰ "Against unjust usurpation or against wanton or too powerful rebellion, the princes of protected states may fairly call upon us for assistance"⁵¹ wrote the Governor-General, "but not against universal disaffection and insurrection caused by their own injustice, incapacity, and misrule." In any case, the express sanction of Government was essential before any armed intervention could take place; and in acting without this authority, both Colebrooke and Hawkins had exceeded their powers.

Perhaps the most striking instance of Government's determination to refrain from intervention in the internal affairs of its dependent states was the reversal of its opium policy. Metcalfe had fought strenuously to secure the abrogation of the opium treaties made with the Malwa states at the end of the Maratha War in 1818, especially as they concerned the states of Bundi and Kotah; and to his influence, more than to any other factor, the change of policy was due. He claimed that British restrictions on the growth of the poppy crippled the revenues of the states concerned; and

49. Bengal Political Consultations. 13th June. 1828. No. 5.

50. Bengal Letters Received. 4th March. 1831. paras 86 - 97.

51. Ibid. 3rd Oct. 1829. para 90.

that the Malwa states were being deliberately impoverished in order to preserve a monopoly which worked exclusively to the advantage of British interests. This he denounced as " a lamentable evil," more especially as the widespread smuggling which resulted frequently involved loss of life.⁵² The death of a prince of the Bundi royal house in one such affray caused Metcalfe to raise the question again in 1828; and Bentinck ordered an enquiry. Reports received from British Agents in Malwa showed a general concurrence of opinion that the restrictive policy of the Government was burdensome to the states and adversely affected their relations with the paramount power: and as a result, Bentinck resolved "to withdraw altogether interference with the growth and transit of opium throughout Central India, confining our restrictions upon exportation to our own territories."⁵³ This abrogation of the opium treaties was received with rejoicing throughout Malwa; and in Kotah and Bundi, " as the greatest boon that could have been conferred."⁵⁴

In one other state, that of Udaipur, there was a marked withdrawal of British intervention between 1827 and 1832. Government had previously intervened at the request of the Maharaja to help him subdue his insurgent feudatories, the Grassia chiefs.⁵⁵ Regular troops sent from Bombay and local

52. Bengal Political Consultations. 21st Mar. 1828. Nos. 78 & 79.

53. Ibid. 19th June. 1829. No. 70.

54. Bengal Letters Received. 9th Oct. 1830. para. 98.

55. Ibid. 8th May. 1829. para. 132.

and vide supra chapter. 7. p. 238.

levies raised by Captain Spiers had been only partially successful against these hill tribes of Mewar; until in 1828, an agreement was reached with Daulat Singh of Jowass;⁵⁶ after which most of the other Grassia chiefs showed themselves willing to submit to British arbitration. In the ensuing negotiations, the Maharaja of Udaipur acknowledged the independence of several Grassia chiefs who were taken under British protection. They were then placed under the superintendence of the Agent at Serohi who was responsible to the Resident at Delhi for their good conduct. As a result of this settlement, it became possible to withdraw British troops from Mewar and to close the Political Agency at Udaipur.

Thus throughout Rajputana, there was a general withdrawal of active intervention by the paramount power between 1827 and 1832, though the indirect pressure it exerted over its subordinate allies was still considerable. The Governor-General was particularly anxious that the humanitarian code prevailing in the Company's territories should be extended to its subordinate dependencies; and that such practices as sati and the buying and selling of female slaves should cease. Bentinck felt that treaty obligations forbade open interference in these matters; but he instructed Lockett to emphasise

" the credit which would attach in the estimation of the British Government " to any ruler who should prohibit the traffic in female slaves within his territory.⁵⁷ As a result, the practice was made illegal in Bundi and Kotah;⁵⁸ and when two female slaves escaped from the palace at Delhi, not even the King's protestations could procure their return. The custom of sati was more difficult to suppress; but a direct remonstrance from the Governor-General to the Raja of Patiala led to the arrest and punishment of two families in which widows had been immolated on their husbands' funeral pyres.⁵⁹ In such ways as these, the influence of British opinion percolated into Indian states and tended to produce conformity to the humanitarian standards of the paramount power.

The attention of the Governor-General, however, was soon actively engaged in efforts to suppress a more wide-spread evil - that of thagi. Atrocities committed by associations of armed bands of robbers, or thugs as they were commonly called, was a recrudescence a decade later of the Pindari terror.⁶⁰ Some Rajput states had taken the line of least resistance and had compounded with the thugs, even to the extent of maintaining

- 57. Bengal Political Consultations. 13th Aug. 1832. No. 26.
- 58. Bengal Letters Received. 21st Nov. 1833. paras 124 & 125.
- 59. Bengal Political Consultations. 17th Sept. 1832. No. 52.
- 60. Ibid. 30th March. 1832. No. 22.

armed bands of robbers as retainers at their courts; while others had withdrawn troops from frontier posts leaving the free-booters unmolested to pillage the border districts. ⁶² Bentinck was determined to break this link between subordinate states and the free-booters, declaring it to be "a distinct breach of the treaties of alliance;" and it was made plain to the dependent states of Rajputana that the paramount power expected them to police their frontiers, and deliver to justice any fugitives seeking refuge within their borders.

The thugs were active on the frontiers of Bikaner, Jodhpur, and Jaipur as early as 1828; and during the next three years there was widespread robbery and pillage in Central India and in the hinterland behind Bombay. British territory was not directly affected until 1832 when Rewari in the Delhi Territory was attacked. As the paramount power, the British Government was responsible for the maintenance of law and order; and to eradicate the evil, in 1831 Bentinck launched a campaign to suppress the thugs, which continued for several years. The

61. Bengal Political Consultations. 3rd April. 1831. No. 44.

(The rulers of Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Bikaner had given support to armed bands of Shikawatti robbers.)

62. This happened in Jodhpur where the Raja had withdrawn troops from the outposts of Balnir and Boyatra, thus giving the Parkur bands a free hand to ravage the Kutch district. The resulting attacks had drawn a protest from the Bombay Government to the Governor-General.

Bengal Political Consultations. 2nd Dec. 1831. No. 17. &

28th May 1832. Nos. 25 & 26.

63. Bengal Political Consultations. 10th July. 1834. No. 264.

Resident at Delhi was asked to release Lockett, the Agent at Bharatpur, in order that he could visit the Rajput states and collect information about the leaders of the armed bands of free-booters in the area. After a journey of over five hundred miles through Rajwara which he accomplished in two months, Lockett gained sufficient information about the leaders of these armed bands, the numbers they commanded, and their connections with the rulers of native states, for Government to plan a detailed campaign against them. ⁶⁴ As a result of measures initiated in the spring of 1832, bands of free-booters were broken up, and individuals were tracked down, tried, and punished: but the evil was too widespread and indigenous to be easily uprooted; and as late as 1834 the Governor-General was forced to admit that though much progress had been made in the suppression of thagi, it was "to be feared that a long ⁶⁵ period of unremitting exertion " must still be expected.

It was Bentinck who pointed out, in connection with the ravages of these bands of armed marauders, that the paramount power was bound to give protection to its subordinate allies;

64. Bengal Political Consultations. 16th Dec. 1831. No. 17.

65. Bengal Letters Received. 12th June. 1834. paras 34 & 35.

(At the end of Bentinck's administration, a "Department for the Suppression of the Thugs " was created by Government whose business it was to co-ordinate the efforts of all concerned in the suppression of thagi.)

and this he thought, the paramount power had failed to do.

"Since we have wisely abandoned the quixotic attempt of governing all these principalities by our Agents," he wrote in 1832,⁶⁶ "the preservation of tranquility and the introduction of that general law --- by which the relations between Europeans and Natives are mutually regulated, is our only remaining duty---but it has been neglected; and our protecting power is null and void." He thought that this state of affairs was partly due to the distance of many of the Rajput states from the controlling authority of the Resident at Delhi, and to the many and varied duties of that officer which prevented him from giving sufficient time and attention to the affairs of the subordinate states under his jurisdiction. For these reasons, Bentinck proposed a complete reorganisation of the political superintendence of Rajputana which was, in essence, a reversion to the arrangement of 1819 when these states had formed a separate charge under Ochterlony.⁶⁷ All the Rajput states - Udaipur, Jaipur, Kotah, Bundi, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Bharatpur, Alwar, Dholpur Bari, Kerowli, and Sirohi, -- were to be separated from the jurisdiction of the Resident at Delhi and placed under an Agent to the Governor-General residing at Ajmer. Lockett, who was appointed to this office, was given all the dignities and emoluments usually attached to a Resident,

66. Bentinck's Minute of 30th March.1832.

67. vide supra chapter. 5. p.183.

though he was not designated by that title. Aided by three Assistants, he was henceforth to be responsible not only for the administration of Ajmer but also for all matters connected with the subordinate Rajput states.

Thus was the care of Rajputana finally dissociated from the Resident at Delhi: and with its separation, much of the dignity and prestige of that office came to an end. At the same time, the title of Resident was finally abolished; and the officer in charge of the affairs of the Delhi royal family took the title of Agent to the Governor-General. Bentinck's decision to reorganise the political jurisdiction of Delhi and Rajputana was taken after he had toured the area in the winter of 1831 and had met many of the Rajput chiefs. Though conscious that the advice of his Council was not to hand, and that he was acting without consulting Metcalfe, "to whom all the circumstances and complicated politics of Central India are so familiar," Bentinck was sure that the new arrangement was right: and thus, in April 1832 when the Governor-General's Resolution was endorsed by the Supreme Council, the Delhi Residency came to an end.

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The political jurisdiction remaining to the Agent at Delhi after 1832 was relatively insignificant. The handling of the affairs of the royal family, though always a delicate undertaking

68. Bengal Political Consultations. 18th June. 1832. No. 23.

69. Ibid. 16th April. 1832. No. 22.

had lost its erstwhile importance. The Agent still retained his jurisdiction over those jagirdars who owned estates within the bounds of the Delhi Territory; but as jagirdars died, and their estates were resumed by Government, this branch of the Agent's responsibility dwindled proportionately. Only in his supervisory jurisdiction over the Protected Sikh and Hill States did the Agent keep any important political charge outside Delhi.

The lands between the Sutlej and the Jumna had for many years been administered by the Deputy Superintendent stationed at Ludhiana; but between 1827 and 1832, the lands spreading northward to the mountains of Nepal became increasingly important because many Europeans, including the Governor-General, adopted the practice of spending the hot season in the cooler temperature of the hills. Simla, in particular, though situated outside British territory, grew in popularity and importance;⁷⁰ so much so that in 1830 Government decided to acquire the sovereignty of the tract of land surrounding the station. An exchange of territory was effected with⁷¹ the Rajas of Patiala and Kyonthal; and the Principal Assistant at Sabathu was vested with magisterial rights over⁷² the growing European community at Simla. Thus during

70.	Bengal Letters Received.	21st Nov. 1833.	(Political)	para 158.
71.	Ibid.	14th Oct. 1830	"	" 219.
72.	Ibid.	3rd Oct. 1829	"	" 51

the last years of its existence, the authority of the Delhi Residency extended over a new and influential area: roads connecting the Delhi Territory to the hills were constructed; and along them passed a large volume of trade from the Jumna and Ganges valleys to meet the needs of the growing settlement in the hills.

This rapid development led to a revision of the powers and status of the officers who administered the Sikh and Hill States: and when the Delhi Residency came to an end in 1832, the Governor-General decided that Captain Kennedy at Sabathu and Captain Wade at Ludhiana should each assume the title of Agent. They continued, however, in nominal subordination to the Agent at Delhi through whom they continued to correspond with Government and who also dealt with appeals from the Sikh and Hill chiefs against decisions given by the officers at Ludhiana and Sabathu. In all essential matters, however, they became practically independent of the authority of Delhi. Though the Agent at Delhi continued to retain charge of all matters concerning Raja Ranjit Singh of Lahore and Shah Shuja, the ex-King of Kabul, Government tended, in the years following the abolition

73. Bengal Letters Received. 2nd Aug. 1833. (Political) para. 155.

74. In practice, the link between the Delhi Agency and the Sikh and Hill States became so slight that in 1835 the Political Agent at Ambala suggested that his charge should be made into a separate independent Agency; but the Governor-General was unwilling to abolish the intermediate appellate jurisdiction of the Delhi Agency on account of the great distance of the Protected Sikh States from Calcutta. (India and Bengal Letters Received. 30th Dec. 1835. paras. 83 & 84)

of the Delhi Residency, to deal directly with the men on the spot rather than issue instructions to them through the Agent at Delhi. Thus when Bentinck and the Raja of Lahore met at Rampur in 1832, it was the Agent at Ludhiana who accompanied the Governor-General; not the Agent at Delhi. This was typical of the relationship which developed between the Delhi Agent and his nominal subordinates: ⁷⁵ and after 1832, for all practical purposes, the jurisdiction of the Agent was confined to the affairs of the Delhi royal family and to the remaining jagirdars of the Delhi Territory.

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Accompanying the abolition of the Delhi Residency and the political re-organisation in Rajputana, there was a fundamental readjustment of the civil administration of the Delhi Territory in 1832: when revenue and judicial establishments were brought so closely into line with their counterparts in the Regulation Provinces, that for all major purposes, the Delhi Territory ceased to be administered as a separate and distinctive unit, and was treated as part of the Western Provinces of Bengal.

This administrative re-organisation at Delhi was the culmination of a series of measures dating as far back as 1822

75. In 1833, for instance, William Fraser, the Delhi Agent, was rebuked by the Governor-General for having issued direct orders to the Sikh Sirdars instead of approaching them through the Political Agent at Ambala.
(India and Bengal Despatches. 24th July. 1835. para. 55.)

when the Delhi Territory had first been placed under the authority of the Western Board of Revenue: and though between 1825 and 1827 it had reverted under Charles Metcalfe to its former status, the process of bringing its civil administration into conformity with the revenue and judicial procedure of the older provinces was resumed after Metcalfe's departure. That Delhi had remained so long outside the orbit of the Regulations was due, not only to the stubbornness with which her characteristic institutions resisted change and to the personal qualities of Metcalfe, but to the fact that the Bengal provinces themselves were at this time undergoing an administrative transformation at the hands of Bentinck. Once the Governor-General's new enactments were framed, there was a tendency to apply them to provinces on both sides of the Jumna; and in this way, the Delhi Territory was caught up into the new administrative pattern.

One of Bentinck's major re-organisations took effect at the beginning of 1829 when the Governor-General replaced the three revenue boards of the Bengal Presidency by twenty Commissioners of Revenue and Circuit, responsible to the Sadr Board of Revenue and the Sadr Nizamat Adalat at Calcutta; and at the same time, he appointed an officer with similar title and powers to the Delhi Territory. These twenty-one officers were vested with the powers of local revenue boards, courts of

circuit, and superintendents of police; and among them, William Fraser was appointed Commissioner for the Delhi Division and Walter Ewer received charge of the North Doab or Meerut Division. An interesting innovation was made when the Governor-General placed both these Commissioners under the immediate control of Colebrooke, the Delhi Resident, who thus became responsible for the civil administration of a district subject to the Regulation Code as well as for the administration of the Delhi Territory.⁷⁸

As Chief Commissioner, the Resident received the revenue returns of Fraser and Ewer and reported them to the Sadr Board of Revenue at Calcutta: and in his judicial capacity, he exercised over both divisions an authority equal to that of the courts of Sadr Diwanni Adalat and Sadr Nizamat Adalat.⁷⁹

This scheme did not last long or work smoothly. Ewer was not slow to point out that while the Governor-General in Council could issue direct instructions for the Delhi Territory which the Resident put into execution, similar directions for the Regulation Province of the North Doab could only take effect after a legislative enactment had been passed. Difficulties occurred when the Resident tried to co-ordinate differing practices in the two divisions under his control. Colebrooke

77. Bengal Despatches (Judicial) W.P. 26th Jan. 1831. paras. 3&4.

78. Regulation 1 of 1829. and Bengal Letters Received. (Judicial. W.P.) 26th July. 1831.

79. Bengal Letters Received. (Judicial. W.P.) 9th March. 1830 paras. 21 & 22.

urged, for instance, that the North Doab should conform to the⁸⁰ Delhi practice and discontinue the use of corporal punishment; and as a result the Governor-General prohibited the use of the ratan in the North Doab. After Ewer's protest, however,⁸¹ the order was withdrawn as being legally untenable. The North Doab Division was finally separated from the jurisdiction⁸² of the Resident at Delhi in 1831; but the experiment, though short-lived, had been in operation sufficiently long to throw into relief the differences in practice which still existed between the two provinces.

The effect of Regulation 1 of 1829 on the civil administration of the Delhi Territory was to transfer to the newly-appointed Commissioner of Revenue and Circuit certain revenue and judicial functions previously exercised by the Resident. There was, in effect, a considerable delegation of authority. The Commissioner became directly responsible for supervising the five Principal Assistants who sent their revenue returns to him; and he acted as a court of circuit for gaol deliveries, and as a court of appeal for all except the most important⁸³ cases. In fact, except for the final appellate decisions on civil and criminal suits and the ultimate responsibility

80. Bengal Letters Received. (Judicial.W.P.) 9th March 1830. paras 35 & 36.

81. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations. 30th June. 1829. No. 10.

82. Regulation VI of 1831 & Bengal Despatches. 28th Nov. 1832
(Judicial) para. 2.

83. Bengal Revenue Consultations. 10th March. 1829. No. 35.

for revenue which the Resident still retained, direct superintendence of the civil administration of the Delhi Territory was transferred from the Resident to the Commissioner. For another three years, however, the Resident under the Governor-General in Council still remained the chief executive authority. All orders from Government continued to be issued through him; and under his signature all revenue and judicial reports were sent to Calcutta. His, too, was the final decision on all civil matters presented by the Commissioner which in the Resident's opinion called "for interference or revision." The position was aptly summed up by Metcalfe in a Minute dated 23rd August 1830. "There is a gradation of control similar⁸⁴ to that existing in other provinces," he wrote, "--- there are Principal Assistants answering to Judges, Magistrates, and Collectors; --- a Commissioner performing the duties of Commissioners of Revenue and Circuit, and Provincial Courts; --- and a Chief Commissioner exercising the superintendence of the Sadr Adalat and Sadr Board, himself under the control of Government."

This was the system in operation at Delhi when Bentinck visited the Upper Provinces in the winter of 1831. During a tour which took him through Haryana and Ajmer, the Governor-General took counsel with both the Resident and the Commissioner as to the changes he proposed making for the better government

of the Delhi Territory. ⁸⁵ Bentinck thought that the time had come to make fundamental alterations in its administration: and these were eventually embodied in Regulation V of 1832 ⁸⁶ passed on 29th May. By this enactment, the civil powers hitherto exercised by the Resident were transferred to the authorities at Allahabad who presided over the financial and judicial concerns of the Western Provinces of Bengal. In the words of the Regulation, "Circumstances --- having rendered it expedient to abolish the office of Resident and Chief Commissioner at Delhi, and there being consequently no court of ultimate resort for the final disposal of civil and criminal cases, or for purposes of general judicial control, and no authority for the superintendence of revenue affairs, which have heretofore been under the cognizance of that officer --- it has been deemed proper to vest the judicial and revenue control of the districts in question in the Sadr Diwanni Adalat and Nizamat Adalat and the Sadr Board of Revenue at Allahabad respectively." Thus ran the enactment which finally brought to a close the distinct and separate government of the Delhi Territory.

This transference of the chief civil authority for revenue and judicial matters from the Resident at Delhi to the authorities at Allahabad was accompanied by administrative

- 85. Bengal Civil and Judicial Consultations. (W.P.)
29th May 1832. No. 14.
- 86. Bengal Civil and Judicial Consultations. (W.P.)
29th May. 1832. No. 15.

changes within the Delhi Territory which affected the powers exercised by both the Commissioner and the Principal Assistants. These changes, in the main, concerned the judicial system; the collection of revenue remaining as before in the hands of the Principal Assistants whose powers corresponded to those of the Collectors in the Regulation Provinces. The Commissioner, under whose direction they worked, became responsible for revenue and administration throughout the Delhi Territory; his only superior being the Sadr Board of Revenue at Allahabad, to whom the Commissioners of Revenue and Circuit in the Western Provinces of Bengal also reported.

In the judicial sphere, however, the changes effected in 1832 were more far-reaching; and the removal of the ultimate judicial authority from the Resident at Delhi to the courts of Sadr Diwanni Adalat and Sadr Nizamat Adalat at Allahabad, rendered it imperative that there should be established at Delhi an officer exercising high judicial authority, capable of dealing with all issues except those of the greatest importance. On his visit to Delhi in the winter of 1831, it was brought home to the Governor-General that the great volume of business which came for settlement to the city of Delhi could not be dealt with satisfactorily by the Commissioner; more especially as William Fraser, in addition to his revenue responsibilities, was to take over the political duties of Agent to the

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Governor-General at Delhi. Bentinck's solution was to relieve the Commissioner of his judicial functions and to appoint a Judge " for the City and Territory of Delhi."

The first person to hold this office was Thomas Metcalfe, Principal Assistant of the Centre Division of the Delhi Territory. Bentinck was appalled by the multiplicity of duties with which Thomas Metcalfe had to deal in his capacity of "Judge, Magistrate, and Collector of Land Revenue and Customs." 88 "I believe Mr Metcalfe to be as conscientious and indefatigable a servant as Government have," he reported, 89 " but he cannot perform impossibilities, and there can be no question --- that the correct performance of the multifarious duties entrusted to him is more than any one person can satisfactorily get through." The Governor-General accordingly determined that a separate Magistrate and Collector should take over the duties of Principal Assistant in the Centre Division; and that Thomas Metcalfe should give his undivided attention to the work of a Civil and Sessions Judge.

In his capacity as Civil Judge, Thomas Metcalfe had no legal superior in the Delhi Territory; and appeals from his decisions could only be made to the court of Sadr Diwanni

87. Bentinck's Minute dated 9th May 1832. paras 3 & 4.
 (Bengal Civil and Judicial Consultations. W.P. 29th. May 1832. No 14)
88. The separation of revenue and judicial duties advocated for the Centre Division in 1825 had been allowed to fall into abeyance by Colebrooke who had allowed Thomas Metcalfe to re-assume revenue duties.
89. Bentinck's Minute of 9th May. 1832.

Adalat at Allahabad to whom he reported. His main duty was to hold regular courts at Delhi and to give judgment on all civil suits upwards of Rs.5000 in the City as well as trying cases exceeding Rs.1000 from other parts of the Delhi Territory.

Suits of lesser value were to come before the Sadr Amins in the petty courts⁹⁰ at Panipat, Hansi, Rohtuk, and Gurgaon; while at Delhi, a Principal Sadr Amin was appointed to deal with all suits up to the value of Rs.5000. Appeals from decisions given by the Sadr Amins went direct to the Judge instead of, as formerly, to the Principal Assistants. By thus extending the powers of the native judges, Bentinck was able to relieve the Principal Assistants of their judicial functions in the civil courts. He considered it "objectionable" that "the powers of Judge, Magistrate, and Collector, should be united⁹¹ in the hands of one individual;" and for the future, like their counterparts in the Regulation Provinces, the Principal Assistants of the Delhi Territory were to be magistrates and collectors only.

As Sessions Judge at Delhi, Thomas Metcalfe gave judgment in his Criminal Court on all offenders committed for trial by the Principal Assistants in their capacity as magistrates;

90. Regulation IV of 1827 had extended the power of Sadr Amins to try suits up to Rs.1000 in the Regulation Provinces.

91. Bengal Civil Judicial Consultations.W.P. 29th May.1832.No.14.

and appeals from his sentences could be made only to the Sadr Nizamat Adalat at Allahabad. All prisoners, save those from Hansi, were sent to Delhi for trial; but Metcalfe was to proceed to Hansi in person to hold gaol deliveries there, the distance being too great for the regular transmission of prisoners to Delhi.⁹² The only other major change made by Bentinck in 1832 in the administration of the Delhi Territory was the merging of the Rohtuk and Hissar divisions of the west under Hugh Fraser as Principal Collector and Magistrate for the Hariana division with his headquarters at Hansi; a Deputy Magistrate and Collector being stationed at Rohtuk.

This re-organisation of the administration of the Delhi Territory came entirely from Bentinck's initiative; Charles Metcalfe and the other members of the Supreme Council not being consulted until the Governor-General's Draft Resolution reached them in Calcutta. Bentinck was mainly actuated by a desire to bring an area which seemed to him "to be a law unto itself" within the general framework of the reforms he was introducing into the Bengal Provinces. By replacing the Resident by an Agent, whose civil powers corresponded to those exercised by Commissioners of Revenue and Circuit in the Bengal Presidency, and by taking from the Principal Assistants their judicial powers in the civil courts, Bentinck aimed at making the

administration of the divisions of the Delhi Territory identical with the zillahs governed by magistrates and collectors in the provinces across the Jumna. The extension of the powers exercised by native judges was not confined to Delhi, but was part of a general change taking place throughout Bengal.⁹³

It was motived mainly by the need for economy; as was the merging of the appellate authorities at Allahabad: but overriding all other considerations, was the Governor-General's intention to iron out the administrative peculiarities which differentiated the institutions of the Delhi Territory from those in the Regulation Provinces of Bengal. It was significant, however, that although Bentinck came to Delhi in 1831 with this intention, his conversations with Martin, William Fraser, and the Principal Assistants caused him to refrain from formally placing the Delhi Territory under the Regulation Code. "It is understood that in all their proceedings the Delhi authorities are guided by the spirit of the Regulations," he wrote,⁹⁴ "but I am not aware of any sufficient reason why they should not be acted up to their letter as regards at least the administration of justice." Yet in spite of this opinion, the introduction of the civil and judicial code of Bengal was left to the future, Section IV of Regulation V of 1832 declaring that it should

93. Bengal Letters Received. (Revenue and Judicial)
15th September. 1831. paras 13-17.

94. Bengal Political Consultations. 16th April. 1832. No. 22.

" be competent for the Governor-General in Council whenever it may be deemed expedient to introduce the whole or part of the Regulations in force into the Delhi Territory," and that an order or Resolution of Government should be "sufficient authority for that purpose."

A Draft Resolution embodying these changes was sent to Calcutta in order that a Regulation should be passed by the Council. It fell to Charles Metcalfe as Vice-President to deal with the business, and he could not refrain from registering his dislike of the whole proposition in a dissenting Minute. " I wish to guard myself against the supposition of an unqualified concurrence on my part in the opinions which have led to this change," he wrote. ⁹⁵ "The chief alteration is the separation of authorities which have hitherto been united ---- It appears to me on the contrary highly desirable that all the powers of administration should be united in one individual superintending a District, and I anticipate nothing but deterioration from the change.-----The change, however, is consistent with the general system of our administration in the other divisions of territory, and I do not intend to urge my peculiar opinions in opposition to it. The union of the powers of Magistrates and Collectors

95. Metcalfe's Minute of 29th May, 1832.
Bengal Civil & Judicial Consultations.W.P. 29th May.1832.
No.14.

is to remain, and we are establishing the same union generally in other places, contrary to what has heretofore existed. For that arrangement I am invariably an advocate-----Another part of the proposed change appears to me to be questionable---the removal of the controlling authority from Delhi to Allahabad." Thus Metcalfe protested; but he knew it was futile to run against the tide; and Regulation V of 1832 was duly passed.

And so, with the abolition of the Residency and the passing of the ultimate control in civil affairs to the authorities at Allahabad, the Delhi Territory ceased to be a separate administrative unit. In the ensuing two years, the process of assimilation was extended when Delhi, together with the other territories under the jurisdiction of the Sadr Diwanni Adalat and the Sadr Nizamat Adalat at Allahabad were incorporated into the new presidency of Agra; and again, in 1835, were re-constituted to form the North-West Provinces. During the course of these vicissitudes, the Delhi Territory tended to become more and more like her neighbours across the Jumna. Little of her former unique character remained save the ancient indigenous institutions connected with the soil which persisted in spite of all governmental changes-

the village communities with their communal ownership and management of the land and the assembly of the people in their village panchayets.⁹⁷ In one sense, Delhi remained unique so long as it continued to house the King and the royal family; yet after 1832, and more especially after the death of Akbar II in 1837, this factor became progressively less important, until it was finally shattered by the Mutiny of 1858:⁹⁸ but by that time, " the old Delhi System " of Metcalfe's day had become an anachronism; and the splendours of the royal house of Delhi but shadows of its former greatness.

97. It was significant that in the settlement of the N.W. Provinces which took place between 1834 and 1844, engagements continued to be made with the village community as a whole; traditional rights in the soil were acknowledged and preserved in the " Record of Rights;" and the conditions of settlement made definite provision for the maintenance of the indigenous village police.
(House of Commons Papers 1857-1858.No.78.App.B. & No.181.)
98. Vide Andre's.C.F. "Zuka Ullah of Delhi " p.31.

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